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## *The Three Fates.<sup>1</sup>*

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'DR. CLAUDIUS,' &C.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEN George had seen old Tom Craik enter his carriage and drive away from the house, he breathed more freely. He could not think very connectedly of what had happened, but it seemed to him that the old man had played a part quite as contemptible as that which Totty herself had sustained so long. He would assuredly not have believed that the terrific anger of which he had witnessed the explosion was chiefly due to the discovery of what was intended to be a good action. Craik had never liked to be found out, and it was especially galling to him to be exposed in the act of endeavouring to make amends for the past. But for this consideration, he would have been quite capable of returning the will to its place in the cabinet, and of leaving the house quietly. He would have merely sent for a lawyer and repeated the document with a new date, to deposit it in some place to which his sister could not possibly gain access. But his anger had been aroused in the first moment by the certainty that Totty had understood his motives and must secretly despise him for making such a restitution of ill-gotten gain. George could not have comprehended this, and he feared that the old man should do some irreparable harm if he were left any

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longer with the object of his wrath. The look in Craik's eyes had not been reassuring, and it was by no means sure that the whole affair had not finally unsettled his intellect.

There was little ground for any such fear, however, as George would have realised if he could have followed Mr. Craik to his home, and seen how soon he repented of having endangered his health by giving way to his wrath. An hour later he was in bed and his favourite doctor was at his side, watching every pulsation of his heart and prepared to do battle at the first attack of any malady which should present itself.

George himself was far less moved by what had occurred than he would have believed possible. His first and chief sensation was a sickening disgust with Totty and with all that recent portion of his life in which she had played so great a part. He had been deceived and played with on all sides, and his vanity revolted at the thought of what might have been if Craik's discovery had not broken through the veil of Totty's duplicity. It made him sick to feel that while he had fancied himself courted and honoured and chosen as a son-in-law for his own sake and for the sake of what he had done in the face of such odds, he had really been looked upon as an object of speculation, as a thing worth buying at a cheap price for the sake of its future value. Beyond this, he felt nothing but a sense of relief at having been released from his engagement. He had done his best to act honestly, but he had often feared that he was deceiving himself and others in the effort to do what seemed honourable. He did not deny, even now, that what he had felt for Mamie might in good time have developed into a real love, but he saw clearly at last that while his senses had been charmed and his intelligence soothed, his heart had never been touched. Doubts about Mamie herself would present themselves, though he drove them resolutely away. It was natural that he should find it hard to realise in her that which he had never felt during their long intercourse, and while his instinct told him that the young girl had been innocent of all her mother's plotting and scheming, he said to himself that she would easily recover from her disappointment. If he was troubled by any regret it was rather that he should not have left her mother's house as soon as he had seen that she was interested, than that he should have failed to love her as he had tried to do. On the other hand he admitted that his conduct had been excusable, considering the pressure which Totty had brought to bear upon him.

The most unpleasant point in the future was the explanation

which must inevitably take place between himself and Sherrington Trimm. It would be hard to imagine a meeting more disagreeable to both parties as this one was sure to be. There could be no question about Trimm's innocence in the whole affair, for his character was too well known to the world to admit the least suspicion. But it would be a painful matter to meet him and talk over what had happened. If possible, the interview must be avoided, and George determined to attempt this solution by writing a letter setting forth his position with the utmost clearness. He turned up the steps of a club to which he belonged and sat down to the task.

What he said may be summed up in a few words. He took it for granted that Trimm would be acquainted with what had occurred, by the time the letter reached him. It only remained for him to repeat what he had said to Mamie herself, to wit, that if she would marry him, he was ready to fulfil his engagement. He concluded by saying that he would wait a month for the definite answer, after which time he intended to go abroad. He sealed the note and took it with him, intending to send it to Trimm's house in the evening. As luck would have it, however, he met Trimm himself in the hall of the club. He had stopped on his way up town to refresh himself with a certain mild drink of his own devising.

'Hilloa, George!' he cried in his cheery voice. 'What is the matter?' he asked anxiously as he saw the expression on the other's face.

'Have you been at home yet?' George asked.

'No.'

'Something very disagreeable has happened. I have just written you a note. Will you take it with you and read it after you have heard what they have to say?'

'Confound it all!' exclaimed Sherry Trimm. 'I am not fond of mystery. Come into a quiet room and tell me all about it.'

'I would rather that you found it out for yourself,' said George, drawing back.

Sherry Trimm looked keenly at him, and then took him by the arm.

'Look here, George,' he said, 'no nonsense. I do not know what the trouble is, but I see it is serious. Let us have it out, right here.'

'Very well,' George answered. 'Your wife has made trouble,' he said, as soon as they were closeted in one of the small rooms.

'You drew up Mr. Craik's will, and you kept his secret. When you had gone abroad, your wife got the will out of the deed box in your office and took it home with her. She kept it in that Indian cabinet, and Mr. Craik found it there this afternoon, and made a fearful scene. Unfortunately your wife could not find any answer to what he said, and thereupon Mamie declared that she would not marry me.'

• Sherrington Trimm's pink face had grown slowly livid while George was speaking.

'What did Tom say?' he asked quietly.

'He hinted that his sister had not been wholly disinterested in her kindness to me,' said George. 'Unfortunately Mamie and I were present. I did the best I could, but the mischief was done.'

Sherrington said nothing more, but began to walk up and down the small room nervously, pulling at his short grizzled moustache from time to time. Like every one else who had been concerned in the affair, he grasped the whole situation in a moment.

'This is a miserable business,' he said at last, in a tone that expressed profound humiliation and utter disgust.

George did not answer, for he was quite of the same opinion. He stood leaning against a card-table, drumming with his fingers on the green cloth behind him. Sherry Trimm paused in his walk, and struck his clenched fist upon the palm of his other hand. Then he shook his head and began to pace the floor again.

'An abominable business,' he muttered. 'I cannot see that there is anything to be done, but to beg your pardon for it all,' he said, suddenly turning to George.

'You need not do that,' George answered readily. 'It is not your fault, Cousin Sherry. All I want to say is what I had already written to you. If Mamie will change her mind and marry me, I am ready.'

Trimm looked at him sharply.

'You are a good fellow, George,' he said. 'But I don't think I could stand that. You never loved her as you ought to love to be happy. I saw that long ago, and I guessed that there had been something wrong. You have been tricked into the whole thing, and just go away and leave me here, will you? I cannot stand this.'

George took the outstretched hand and shook it warmly. Then he left the room and closed the door behind him. In that moment he pitied Sherrington Trimm far more than he pitied Mamie herself. He could understand the man's humiliation



better than the girl's broken heart. He went out of the club and turned homewards. He had yet to communicate the intelligence to his father, and he was oddly curious to see what the old gentleman would say. An hour later he had told the whole story with every detail he could remember, from the day when Totty had told him to go and see Mamie to his recent interview with Sherry Trimm.

'I am sorry for you, George,' said Jonah Wood. 'I am very sorry for you.'

'I think, on the whole, that is more than I can say for myself,' George answered. 'I am far more sorry for Mamie and her father. It is a relief to me. I would not have believed it this morning.'

'Do you mean that you were not in love?'

'Yes. I am just as fond of her as ever. There is nothing I would not do for her. But I do not want to marry her, and I never did, till that old cat made me think it was my duty.'

'I should think you would have known what your duty was, without waiting to be told. I would have told her mother that I did not love the girl, and I would have gone the next morning.'

'You are so sensible, father!' George exclaimed. 'I looked at it differently. It seemed to me that if I had gone so far as to make Mamie believe that I loved her, I ought to be able to love her in earnest.'

'When you are older, you will know better,' observed the old gentleman severely. 'You have too much imagination. As for Mr. Craik, he will not leave you his money now. I doubt if he meant to.'

George went and shut himself up in the little room which had witnessed so many of his struggles and disappointments. He sat down in his shabby old easy-chair and lit a short pipe and fell into a profound reverie. The unexpected had played a great part in his life, and as he reviewed the story of the past three years, he was surprised to find how very different his own existence had been from that of the average man. With the exception of his accident on the river and the scene he had witnessed to-day, nothing really startling had happened to him in that time, and yet his position at the present moment was as different from his position three years earlier as it possibly could be. In that time he had risen from total obscurity into the publicity of reputation, if not of celebrity. He was not fond of disturbing the mass of papers that encumbered his table, and there, deep down under the rest were still to be found rough drafts

of his last poor little reviews. Hanging from one corner there was visible the corrected 'revise' of one of his earliest accepted articles. At the other end, beneath a piece of old iron which he used as a paper-weight, lay the manuscript of his first novel, well thumbed and soiled, and marked at intervals in pencil with the names of the compositors who had set up the pages in type. There, upon the table, lay the accumulated refuse of three years of hard work, of the three years which had raised him into the public notice. Much of that work had been done under the influence of one woman, of one fair young girl who had bent over his shoulder as he read her page after page, and whose keen, fresh sight had often detected flaws and errors where he himself saw no imperfection. She had encouraged him, had pushed him, and urged him on, in spite of himself, until he had succeeded beyond his wildest expectations. Then he had lost her, because he had thought that she was bound to marry him. He did not think so now, for he felt that in that case, too, he had been mistaken, as in the more recent one he had deceived himself. He had never been in love. He had never felt what he described in his own books. His blood had never raced through his veins for love, as it had often done for anger and sometimes for mere passing passion. Love had never taken him and mastered him and carried him away in its arms beyond all consideration for consequences. It was not because he was strong. He knew that whatever people might think of him, he had often been weak, and had longed to be made strong by a love he could not feel. He had been ready to yield himself to a belief in affections which had proved unreal, and which had disappointed himself by their instability and by the ease with which he had recovered from them. Even in the solitude of his own room he was ashamed to own to his inner consciousness how little he had been moved by all that had happened to him in those three years.

He thought of Johnson, the pale-faced hardworking man, whose heart was full of unsatisfied ambition, and who had distanced his competitors by sheer energy and enthusiasm. He envied the man his belief in himself and his certainty of slow but sure success. Slow, indeed, it must be. Johnson had toiled for many years at his writing to attain the position he occupied, to be considered a good judge and a ready writer by the few who knew him, to gain a small but solid reputation in a small circle. He had worked much harder than George himself, and yet to-day George Wood was known and read where William Johnson had never been heard

of. Of the two Johnson was by far the better satisfied with his success, though of the two he possessed by very much the more ambition, in the ordinary acceptation of the word.

Then George thought of Thomas Craik, and of his sneer at ambitious men. He had said that there was no pleasure in possession, but only in getting, getting, getting, as long as a man had breath; that the wish to excel other men in anything was a drawback and a disadvantage, and that nothing in the world was worth having for its own sake, from money to fame, through all the catalogue of what is attainable by humanity. And yet, Thomas Craik was an instance of a very successful man, who had some right to speak on the subject. Whether he had got his money by fair means or foul had nothing to do with the argument. He had it, and he could speak from experience about the pleasures of possession. There must be some truth in what he said. George himself had attained before the age of thirty what many men labour in vain to reach throughout a lifetime. The case was similar. Whether he had deserved the reputation he had so suddenly acquired or not, mattered little. Many critics said that he had no claim to it. Many others said that he deserved more than he got. Whichever side was right, he had it, as Tom Craik had his money. Did it give him any satisfaction? None whatever, beyond the material advantages it brought him, and which only pleased him because they made him independent of his father's help. When he thought of what he had done, he found no savour of pride in the reflection, nothing which really flattered his vanity, nothing to send a thrill of happiness through him. He was cold, indifferent to all he had done. It would not have entered his mind to take up one of his own books and glance over the pages. On the contrary, he felt a strong repulsion for what he had written the moment it was finished. He admitted that he was foolish in this, as in many other things, and that he would in all likelihood improve his work by going over it and polishing it, even by entirely rewriting a great part of it. He was not deterred from doing so by indolence, for his rarely energetic temperament loved hard work and sought it. It was rather a profound dissatisfaction with all he did which prevented him from expending any further time upon each performance when he had once reached the last page. Nothing satisfied him, neither what he did himself, nor what he saw done by others.

Thinking the matter over in his solitude, the inevitable conclusion seemed to be that he was one of those discontented beings

who can never be pleased with anything, nor lose themselves in an enthusiasm without picking to pieces the object that has made them enthusiastic. But this was not true either. There were plenty of great works in the world for which he had no criticism, and which never failed to excite his boundless admiration. He smiled to himself as he thought that what would really please him would be to be forced into the same attitude of respect before one of his own books, into which he naturally fell before the great masterpieces of literature. He would have been hard to satisfy, he thought, if that would not have satisfied him. Was that, then, the vision which he was really pursuing? It was folly to suppose that he would be so mad, and yet, at that time, he felt that he desired nothing else and nothing less than that, and since that was absolutely unattainable, he was condemned to perpetual discontent, to be borne with the best patience he could find. Beyond this, he could find no explanation of his feelings about his own work.

The only other source of happiness of which he could conceive was love, and this brought him back to his kindly and grateful memories of Constance Fearing, and to the more disturbing recollection of his cousin. The latter, also, had played a part and had occupied a share in his life. He had watched her more closely than he had ever watched anyone, and had studied her with an unconsciously unswerving attention which proved how little he had loved her and how much she had interested him. He was, indeed, never well aware that he was subjecting any one to a microscopic intellectual scrutiny, for he possessed in a high degree the faculty of unintentional memory. While it cost him a severe effort to commit to memory a dozen verses of any poet, old or modern, he could nevertheless recall with faultless accuracy both sights and conversations which he had seen and heard, even after an interval of many years, provided that his interest had been somewhat excited at the time. The half active, half indolent, wholly luxurious life at his cousin's house had in the end produced a strong impression upon him. It had been like an interval of lotus-eating upon an almost uninhabited island, varied only by such work as he chose to do at his own leisure and in his own way. During more than four months the struggles of the world had been hidden from him, and had temporarily ceased to play any part in his thoughts. The dreamy existence spent between flowers and woods and water, where every want had been anticipated almost before it was felt, served now as a background for the picture of the young girl who had been so constantly with

him, herself as natural as her surroundings, the incarnation of life and of life's charm, the negation of intellectual activity and of the sufferings of thought, a lovely creature who could only think, reason, enjoy and suffer with her heart, and whose mind could acquire but little, and was incapable of giving out. She had been the central figure and had contributed much to the general effect, so much, indeed, that under pressure of circumstances he had been willing to believe that he could love her enough to marry her. The scene had changed, hallucination had vanished and the delusion was destroyed, but the memory of it all remained, and now disturbed his recollection of more recent events. There was a sensuous attraction in the pictures that presented themselves, from which he could not escape, but which he for some reason despised and tried to put away from him, by thinking again of Constance, of the cold purity of her face, of her over-studied conscientiousness, and of her complete subjection to her sincere but mistaken self-criticism.

He wondered whether he should ever marry, and what manner of woman his wife would turn out to be. Of one thing he was sure. He would not now marry any woman unless he loved her with all his heart, and he would not ask her to marry him unless he were already sure of her love. The third must be the decisive case, from which he should never desire to withdraw, and in which there should be no disappointment. He thought of Grace Fearing, and of her marriage and short-lived happiness, with its terribly sudden ending and the immensity of sorrow that had followed its extinction. It almost seemed to him as though it would be worth while to suffer as she suffered if one could have what she had found ; for the love must have been great and deep and sincere indeed, which could leave such scars where it had rested. To love a woman so well able to love would be happiness. She never doubted herself nor what she felt ; all her thoughts were clear, simple and strong ; she did not analyse herself to know the measure of her own sincerity, nor was she a woman to be carried away by a thoughtless passion. She loved and she hated frankly, sincerely, without a side thought of doubt on the one hand or of malice on the other. She was morally strong without putting on any affectation of strength, she was clear-sighted without making any pretence to exceptional intelligence, she was passionate without folly, and wise without annoyance, she was good, not sanctimonious, she was dignified without vanity. In short, as George thought of her, he saw that the



woman who openly disliked him and opposed him in former days, was of all three the one for whom he felt the most sincere admiration. He remembered now that at his first meeting with the two sisters he had liked Grace better than Constance, and would then have chosen her as the object of his attentions had she been free, and had he foreseen that friendship was to follow upon intimacy and love on friendship. Unfortunately for George Wood, and for all who find themselves in a like situation, that concatenation of events is the one most rarely foreseen by anybody, and George was fain to content himself with speculating upon the nature of the happiness he would have enjoyed had he been loved by a woman who seemed now to be dead to the whole world of the affections. It was sufficient to compare her with her sister to understand that she was, of the two, the nobler character; it was enough to think of Mamie to see that in that direction no comparison was even possible.

‘It would be strange if it should be my fate to love her, after all,’ George thought. ‘She would never love me.’

He roused himself from his reverie and sat down to his table, by sheer force of habit. Paper and ink were before him, and his pen lay ready to his hand, where he had last thrown it down. Almost unconsciously he began to write, putting down notes of a situation that had suddenly presented itself to his mind. The pen moved along, sometimes running rapidly, sometimes stopping with an impatient hesitation during which it continued to move uneasily in the air. Characters shaped themselves out of the chaos, and names sounded in the willing ear of the writer. The situation which he had first thought of was all at once transformed into a detail in a second and larger action, another possibility started up out of darkness in brilliant clearness, and absorbed the matters already thought of into itself, broadening and strengthening every moment. Whole chapters now stood out as if already written, and in their places. A detail here, another there, to be changed or adapted, one glance at the whole, one or two names spoken aloud to see how they sounded in the stillness, a pause of a moment, a fresh sheet of paper, and George Wood was launched upon the first chapter of a new novel, forgetful of Grace, of Constance Fearing, and even of poor Mamie herself and of all that had happened only two or three hours earlier.

He was writing, working with passionate and all-absorbing interest at the expression of his fancies. What he did was good, well thought, clearly expressed, harmoniously composed. When



it was given to the public it was spoken of as the work of a man of heart, full of human sympathy and understanding. At the time when he was inventing the plot and writing down the beginning of his story, a number of people intimately connected with his life were all in one way or another suffering acutely, and he himself was the direct or indirect cause of all their sufferings. He was neither a cruel man, nor thoughtless, nor unkind, but he was for the time utterly unconscious of the outer world, and if not happy, at least profoundly interested in what he was doing.

During that hour, Sherrington Trimm, pale and nervous, was walking up and down his endless beat in the little room at the club where George had left him, trying to master his anger and disgust before going home to meet his wife and the inevitable explanation which must ensue. The servant came in and lit the gaslight and stirred the fire, but Trimm never saw him nor varied the monotony of his walk.

At his own house, things were no better. Totty, completely broken down by the failure of all her plans and the disclosure of her discreditable secret, had recovered enough from her hysterics to be put to bed by her faithful maid, who was surprised to find that, as all signs fail in fair weather, none of the usual remedies could extract a word of satisfaction or an expression of relief from her mistress. Downstairs, in the little boudoir where she had last seen the man she loved, Mamie was lying stretched upon the divan, dry-eyed, with strained lips and blanched cheeks, knowing nothing save that her passion had dashed itself to pieces against a rock in the midst of its fairest voyage.

In another house, far distant, Grace Bond was leaning against a broad chimney-piece, a half sorrowful, half contemptuous smile upon her strong sad face, as she thought of all her sister's changes and vacillations and of the aimlessness of the fair young life. Above, in her own room, Constance Fearing was kneeling and praying with all her might, though she hardly knew for what, while the bright tears flowed down her thin cheeks in an unceasing stream.

'And yet, when he came to life, he called me first!' she cried, stretching out her hands and looking upward as though protesting against the injustice of Heaven.

And in yet another place, in a magnificent chamber, where the softened light played upon rich carvings and soft carpets, an old man lay dying of his last fit of anger.

All for the sake of George Wood who, conscious that many if

not all were in deep trouble, anxiety, or suffering, was driving his pen unceasingly from one side of a piece of paper to the other, with an expression of keen interest on his dark face, and a look of eager delight in his eyes such as a man may show who is hunting an animal of value, and who is on the point of overtaking his prey.

But for the accident of thought which had thrown a new idea into the circulation of his brain, he would still have been sitting in his shabby easy-chair, thoughtfully pulling at his short pipe, and thinking of all those persons whom he had seen that day, kindly of some, unkindly of others, but not deaf to all memories and shut off from all sympathy by something which had suddenly arisen between himself and the waking, suffering world.

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#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE sun shines alike upon the just and the unjust, and it would seem to follow that all men should be judged by the same measure in the more important actions and emotions of their lives. To apply the principle of a double standard to mankind is to run the risk of producing some very curious results in morality. And yet, there are undoubtedly cases in which a man has a claim to special consideration and, as it were, to a trial by a special jury. There have been many great statesmen whose private practice in regard to financial transactions has been more than shady, and there have been others whose private lives have been spotless, but whose political doings have been unscrupulous in the extreme. There are professions and careers in which it is sufficient to act precisely as all others engaged in the same occupation would act, and in which the most important element of success is a happy faculty of keeping the brain power at the same unvarying pressure, neither high nor low, but always ready to be used, and in such a state that it may always be relied upon to perform the same amount of work in a given time. There are other occupations in which there are necessarily moments of enormous activity at uncertain intervals, followed by periods of total relaxation and rest. One might divide all careers roughly into two classes, and call the one the continuous class and the other the intermittent. The profession of the novelist falls within the latter division. Very few men or women who have written well have succeeded in reducing the exercise of their art to a necessary daily function of the body. Very few intellectual machines can be made to bear

the strain of producing works of imagination in regular quantities throughout many years at an unvarying rate, day after day. Neither the brain nor the body will bear it, and if the attempt be made, either the one or the other, or both, will ultimately suffer. Without being necessarily spasmodic, the story-teller's activity is almost unavoidably intermittent. There are men who can take up the pen and drive it during seven, eight, and even nine hours a day for six weeks or two months, and who, having finished their story, either fall into a condition of indolent apathy until the next book has to be written, or return at once to some favourite occupation which produces no apparent result, and of which the public has never heard. There are many varieties of the genus author. There is the sailor author, who only comes ashore to write his book, and puts to sea again as soon as it is in the publisher's hands. There is the hunting author, who, as in the case of Anthony Trollope, keeps his body in such condition that he can do a little good work every day of the year, a great and notable exception to the rule. There is the student author, whose laborious work of exegesis will never be heard of, but who interrupts it from time to time in order to produce a piece of brilliant fiction, returning to his Sanscrit each time with renewed interest and industry. There is the musical author, whose preference would have led him to be a professional musician, but who had not quite enough talent for it, or not quite enough technical facility, or whose musical education began a little too late. There is the adventurous author, who shoots in Africa, or has a habit of spending the winter in Eastern Siberia. There is the artistic author, who may be found in out-of-the-way towns in Italy, patiently copying old pictures, as though his life depended upon his accuracy, or sketching ragged boys and girls in very ragged water-colour. There is the social author—and he is not always the least successful in his profession—who is a favourite everywhere, who can dance and sing and act, and who regards the occasional production of a novel as an episode in his life. There is the author who prepares himself many months beforehand for what he intends to do by frequenting the society, whether high or low, which he wishes to depict, who writes his book in one month of the year and spends the other eleven in observing the manners and customs of men and women. There is the author who lives in solitary places and evolves his characters out of his inner consciousness, and who occasionally descends, manuscript in hand, from his inaccessible fastnesses, and ravages

all the coasts of Covent Garden, Henrietta Street, and the Strand, until he has got his price and disappears as suddenly as he came, taking his gold with him, no man knows whither. There is the author whom no man can boast of having ever seen, who never answers a letter, nor gives an autograph, nor lets anyone but his publisher know where he lives, but whose three volumes appear punctually twice a year, and whose name is familiar in many mouths. Unless he is to be found described in an encyclopædia, you will never know whether he is old or young, black or grey, goodlooking or ugly, straight or hunchbacked. He is to you a vague, imaginary personage, surrounded by a pillar of cloud. In reality he is perhaps a fat little man of fifty, who wears gold-rimmed spectacles, and has discovered that he can only write if he lives in one particular Hungarian village with a name that baffles pronunciation, and whose chief interest in life lies in the study of socialism or the cholera microbe. Then again, there is the fighting author, grim, grey, and tough as a Toledo blade, who has ridden through many a hard-fought field in many lands, and has smelt more gunpowder in his time than most great generals, out of sheer love for the stuff. There is also the pacific author, who frequents peace congresses and makes speeches in favour of a general disarming of all nations. There are countless species and varieties of the genus. There is even the poet author, who writes thousands of execrable verses in secret and produces exquisite romances in prose only because he can do nothing else.

If we admit that novels, on the whole, are a good to society at large, as most people, excepting authors themselves, are generally ready to admit, we grant at the same time that they must be produced by individuals possessing the necessary talents and characteristics of intelligence. And if it is shown that a majority of these individuals do their work in a somewhat erratic fashion, and behave somewhat erratically while they are doing it, such defects must be condoned, at least, if not counted to them for positive righteousness. With many of them the appearance of a new idea within the field of their mental vision is equivalent to a command to write, which they are neither able nor anxious to resist; and, if they are men of talent, it is very hard for them to turn their attention to anything else until the idea is expressed on paper. Let them not be thought heartless or selfish if they sometimes seem to care nothing for what happens around them while they are subject to the imperious domination of the new idea. They are neither the one nor the other. They are simply

unconscious, like a man in a cataleptic trance. The plainest language conveys no meaning to their abstracted comprehension, the most startling sights produce no impression upon their sense; they are in another world, living and talking with unseen creations of their own fancy, and for the time being they are not to be considered as ordinary human beings, nor judged by the standard to which other men are subject.

It would not, therefore, be just to say that during the days which followed the breaking off of his engagement with Mamie Trimm, George Wood was cruel or unfeeling because he was wholly unconscious of her existence throughout the greater part of each twenty-four hours. By a coincidence which he would certainly not have invoked, a train of thought had begun its course in his brain within an hour or two of the catastrophe, and he was powerless to stop himself in the pursuit of it until he had reached the end. During nine whole days he never left the house, and scarcely went out of his room except to eat his meals, which he did in a summary fashion without wasting time in superfluous conversation. On the morning of the tenth day he knew that he was at the last chapter, and he sat down at his table in that state of mind to which a very young author is brought by a week and a half of unceasing fatigue and excitement. The room swam with him, and he could see nothing distinctly except his paper, the point of his pen, and the moving panorama in his brain, of which it was essential to catch every detail before it had passed into the outer darkness from which ideas cannot be brought back. His hand was icy cold, moist and unsteady, and his face was pale, the eyelids dark and swollen, and the veins on the temples distended. He moved his feet nervously as he wrote, shrugged his left shoulder with impatience at the slightest hesitation about the use of a word, and his usually imperturbable features translated into expression every thought as rapidly as he could put it into words with his pen. The house might have burned over his head, and he would have gone on writing until the paper under his hand was on fire. No ordinary noise would have reached his ears, conscious only of the scratching of the steel point upon the smooth sheet. He could have worked as well in the din of a public room in an hotel, or in the crowded hall of a great railway station, as in the silence and solitude of his own chamber. He had reached the point of abstraction at which nothing is of the slightest consequence to the writer provided that the ink will flow and the paper will not blot. Like a skilled swordsman, he was



conscious only of his enemy's eye, and of the state of the weapons. The weapons were pen, ink, and paper, and the enemy was the idea to be pursued, overtaken, pierced and pinned down, before it could assume another shape, or escape again into chaos. The sun rose above the little paved brick court below his window, and began to shine into the window itself. Then a storm came up and the sky turned suddenly black, while the wind whistled through the yard with that peculiarly unnatural sound which it makes in great cities, so different from its sighing and moaning and roaring amongst trees and rocks. The first snowflakes were whirled against the panes of glass and slid down to the frame in half-transparent patches. The wind sank again, and the snow fluttered silently down like the unwinding of an endless lace curtain from above. Then the flakes were suddenly illuminated by a burst of sunshine and melted as they fell and turned to bright drops of water in the air, and then vanished again, and the small piece of sky above the great house on the other side of the yard was once more clear and blue, as a sapphire that has been dipped in pure water. It was afternoon, and George was unconscious of the many changes of the day, unconscious that he had not eaten nor drunk since morning, and that he had even forgotten to smoke. One after another the pages were numbered, filled, and tossed aside, as he went on, never raising his head nor looking away from his work lest he should lose something of the play upon which all his faculties were inwardly concentrated, and of which it was his business to transcribe every word, and to note every passing attitude and gesture of the actors who were performing for his benefit.

Some one knocked at the door, gently at first and then more loudly. Then, receiving no answer, the person's footsteps could be heard retreating towards the landing. The firing of a cannon in the room would hardly have made George turn his head at that moment, much less the rapping of a servant's knuckles upon a wooden panel. Several minutes elapsed, and then heavier footsteps were heard again, and the latch was turned and the door moved noiselessly on its hinges. Jonah Wood's iron-grey head appeared in the opening. George had heard nothing, and during several seconds the old gentleman watched him curiously. He had the greatest consideration for his son's privacy when at work, though he could not readily understand the terribly disturbing effect of an interruption upon a brain so much more sensitively organised than his own. Now, however, the case was serious, and



George must be interrupted, cost what it might. He was evidently unconscious that anyone was in the room, and his back was turned as he sat. Jonah Wood resolved to be cautious.

'George!' he whispered, rather hoarsely. But George did not hear.

There was nothing to be done but to cross the room and rouse him. The old man stepped as softly as he could upon the uncarpeted wooden floor, and placed himself between the light and the writer. George looked up and started violently, so that his pen flew into the air and fell upon the boards. At the same time he uttered a short, sharp cry, neither an oath nor exclamation, but a sound such as a man might make who is unexpectedly and painfully wounded in battle. Then he saw his father and laughed nervously.

'You frightened me. I did not see you come in,' he said quickly.

'I am sorry,' said his father, not understanding at all how a man usually calm and courageous could be so easily startled. 'It is rather important, or I would not interrupt you. Mr. Sherrington Trimm is downstairs.'

'What does he want?' George asked vaguely, and looking as though he had forgotten who Sherrington Trimm was.

'He wants you, my boy. You must go down at once. It is very important. Tom Craik was buried yesterday.'

'Buried!' exclaimed George. 'I did not know he was dead.'

'I understand that he died several days ago, in consequence of that fit of anger he had. You remember? What is the matter with you, George?'

'Cannot you see what is the matter?' George cried a little impatiently. 'I am just finishing my book. What if the old fellow is dead? He has had plenty of leisure to change his will in all this time. What does Sherry want?'

'He did not change his will, and Mr. Trimm wants to read it to you. George, you do not seem to realise that you are a very rich man—a very, very rich man,' repeated Jonah Wood with weighty emphasis.

'It will do quite as well if he reads the confounded thing to you,' said George, picking up his pen from the floor beside him, examining the point, and then dipping it into the ink.

He was never quite sure how much of his indifference was assumed and how much of it was real, resulting from his extreme

impatience to finish his work. But to Jonah Wood, it had all the appearance of being genuine.

'I am surprised, George,' said the old gentleman, looking very grave. 'Are you in your right mind? Are you feeling quite well? I am afraid this good news has upset you.'

George rose from the table with a look of disgust, bent down and looked over the last lines he had written, and then stood up.

'If nothing else will satisfy anybody, I suppose I must go down,' he said regretfully. 'Why did not the old brute leave the money to you instead of to me? You do not imagine I am going to keep it, do you? Most of it is yours, anyhow.'

'I understand,' answered Jonah Wood, pushing him gently towards the door, 'that the estate is large enough to cover what I lost four or five times over, if not more. It is very important——'

'Do you mean to say it is as much as that?' George asked in some surprise.

'That seems to be the impression,' answered his father with an odd laugh, which George had not heard for many years. Jonah Wood was ashamed of showing too much satisfaction. It was his principle never to make any exhibition of his feelings, but his voice could not be altogether controlled, and there was an unusual light in his eyes. George, who by this time had collected his senses, and was able to think of something besides his story, saw the change in his father's face and understood it.

'It will be jolly to be rich again, won't it, father?' he said, familiarly and with more affection than he generally showed by manner or voice.

'Very pleasant, very pleasant indeed,' answered Jonah Wood with the same odd laugh. 'Mr. Trimm tells me he has left you the house as it stands with everything in it, and the horses——everything. I must say, George, the old man has made amends for all he did. It looks very like an act of conscience.'

'Amends? Yes, with compound interest for a dozen years or more, if all this is true. Well, here goes the millionaire,' he exclaimed as they left the room together.

It would be hard to imagine a position more completely disagreeable than that in which Sherrington Trimm was placed on that particular afternoon. It was bad enough to have to meet George at all after what had happened, but it was most unpleasant to appear as the executor of the very will which had caused so much trouble, to feel that he was bringing to the heir the very

document which his wife had stolen out of his own office, and handing over to him the fortune which his wife had tried so hard to bring into his own daughter's hands. But Sherrington Trimm's reputation for honesty and his courageous self-possession had carried him through many difficult moments in life, and he would never have thought of deputing anyone else to fulfil the repugnant task in his stead.

Jonah Wood left his son at the door of the sitting-room and discreetly disappeared. George went in and found the lawyer standing before the fire with a roll of papers in his hands. He was a little pale and careworn, but his appearance was as neat and dapper and brisk as ever.

'George,' he said frankly as he took his hand, 'poor Tom has left you everything, as he said he would. Now, I can quite imagine that the sight of me is not exactly pleasant to you. But business is business, and this has got to be put through, so just consider that I am the lawyer and forget that I am Sherry Trimm.'

'I shall never forget that you are Sherry Trimm,' George answered. 'You and I can avoid unpleasant subjects and be as good friends as ever.'

'You are a good fellow, George. The best proof of it is that not a word has been breathed about this affair. We have simply announced that the engagement is broken off.'

'Then Mamie has refused to change her mind,' observed George, wondering how he could ever have been engaged to marry her, and how he could have forgotten that at his last meeting with Sherry Trimm he had still left the matter open, refusing to withdraw his promise. But between that day and this he had lived through many emotions and changing scenes in the playhouse of his brain, and his own immediate past seemed immensely distant from his present.

'Mamie would not change her mind, if I would let her,' Trimm answered briefly. 'Let us get to business. Here is the will. I opened it yesterday after the funeral in the presence of the family and the witnesses as usual in such cases.'

'Excuse me,' George said. 'I am very glad that I was not present, but would it not have been proper to let me know?'

'It would have been, of course. But as there was no obligation in the matter, I did not. I supposed that you would hear of the death almost as soon as it was known. You and your father were known to be on bad terms with Tom, and if you had been sent for it would have looked as though we had all known what

was in the will. People would have supposed in that case that you must have known it also, and you would have been blamed for not treating the old gentleman with more consideration than you did. I have often heard you say sharp things about him at the club. This is a surprise to you. There is no reason for letting anybody suppose that it is not. A lot of small good reasons make one big good one between them.'

'I see,' said George. 'Thank you. You were very wise.'

He took the document from Trimm's hands and read it hastily. The touch of it was disagreeable to him as he remembered where he had last seen it.

'I had supposed that he would make another after what I said to him,' George remarked. 'You are quite sure he did not?'

'Positive. He never allowed it to be out of his sight after he found it. It was under his pillow when he died. The last words that anybody could understand were to the effect that you should have the money, whether you wanted it or not. It was a fixed idea with him. I suppose you know why. He felt that some of it belonged to your father by right. The transaction by which he got it was legal—but peculiar. There are peculiarities in my wife's family.'

Sherry Trimm looked away and pulled his grizzled moustache nervously.

'There will be a good many formalities,' he continued. 'Tom owned property in several different States. I have brought you the schedule. You can have possession in New York immediately, of course. It will take some little time to manage the rest, proving the will half a dozen times over. If you care to move into the house to-morrow, there is no objection, because there is nobody to object.'

'I have a proposition to make,' said George. 'My father is a far better man of business than I. Could you not tell me in round numbers about what I have to expect, and then go over these papers with him?'

'In round numbers,' repeated Trimm thoughtfully. 'The fact is, he managed a great deal of his property himself. I suppose I could tell you within a million or two.'

'A million or two!' exclaimed George. Sherry Trimm smiled at the intonation.

'You are an enormously rich man,' he said quietly. 'The estate is worth anywhere from twelve to fifteen millions of dollars.'

'All mine?'

'Look at the will. He never spent a third of his income, so far as I could find out.'

George said nothing more, but began to walk up and down the room nervously. He detested everything connected with money, and had only a relative idea of its value, but he was staggered by the magnitude of the fortune thus suddenly thrown into his hands. He understood now the expression he had seen on his father's face.

'I had no conception of the amount,' he said at last. 'I thought it might be a million.'

'A million!' laughed Trimm scornfully. 'A man does not live, as he lived, on forty or fifty thousand a year. It needs more than that. A million is nothing nowadays. Every man who wears a good coat has a million. There is not a man living in Fifth Avenue who has less than a million.'

'I wonder how it looks on paper,' said George. 'I will try and go through the schedule with you myself.'

An hour later George was once more in his room. For a few moments he stood looking through the window at the old familiar brick wall and at the windows of the house beyond, but his reflections were very vague and shapeless. He could not realise his position nor his importance, as he drummed a tattoo on the glass with his nails. He was trying to think of the changes that were inevitable in the immediate future—of his life in another house, of the faces of his old acquaintances, and of the expression some of them would wear. He wondered what Johnson would say. The name, passing through his mind, recalled his career, his work and the unfinished chapter that lay on the table behind him. In an instant his brain returned to the point at which he had been interrupted. Tom Craik, Sherry Trimm, the will, and the millions vanished into darkness, and before he was fairly aware of it he was writing again.

The days were short, and he was obliged to light the old kerosene lamp with the green shade which had served him through so many hours of labour and study. The action was purely mechanical, and did not break his train of thought, nor did it suggest that in a few months he would think it strange that he should ever have been obliged to do such a thing for himself. He wrote steadily on to the end, and signed his name and dated the manuscript before he rose from his seat. Then he stretched himself, yawned and looked at his watch, returned to the table, and laid the sheets neatly together in their order with the rest, and put the whole into a drawer.

'That job is done,' he said aloud, in a tone of profound satisfaction. 'And now, I can think of something else.'

Thereupon, without as much as thinking of resting himself after the terrible strain he had sustained during ten days, he proceeded to dress himself with scrupulous care for the evening, and went downstairs to dinner. He found his father in his accustomed place before the fire, reading as usual, and holding his heavy book rigidly before his eyes in a way that would have made an ordinary man's hand ache.

'I have finished my book!' cried George as he entered the room.

'Ah! I am delighted to hear it. Do you mean to say that you have been writing all the afternoon since Mr. Trimm went away?'

'Until half an hour ago.'

'Well, you have exceptionally strong nerves,' said the old gentleman, mechanically raising his book again. Then, as though he were willing to make a concession to circumstances for once in his life, he closed it with a solemn clapping sound and laid it down.

'George, my boy,' he said impressively, 'you are enormously wealthy. Do you realise the fact?'

'I am also enormously hungry,' said George with a laugh. 'Is there any cause or reason in the nature of the cook or of anything else why you and I should not be fed?'

'To tell the truth, I had a little surprise for you,' answered his father. 'I thought we ought to do something to commemorate the event, so I went out and got a brace of canvas-backs from Delmonico's and a bottle of good wine. Kate is roasting the ducks, and the champagne is on the ice. It was a little late when I got back. Sorry to keep you waiting, my boy.'

'Sorry!' cried George. 'The idea of being sorry for anything when there are canvas-backs and champagne in the house. You dear old man! I will pay you for this, though. You shall live on the fat of the land for the rest of your days!'

'Enough is as good as a feast,' observed Jonah Wood with great gravity.

'What roaring feasts we will have—or what stupendously plentiful enoughts, if you like it better! Father, you are better already. I heard you laugh to-day as you used to laugh when I was a boy.'

'A little prosperity will do us both good,' said the old gentleman, who was rapidly warming into geniality.



'I say,' suggested George. 'I have finished my book, and you have nothing to do. Let us pack up our traps and go to Paris and paint the town a vivid scarlet.'

'What?' asked Jonah Wood, to whom slang had always been a mystery.

'Paint the town red,' repeated George. 'In short, have a spree, a lark, a jollification, you and I.'

'I should like to see Paris again, well enough, if that is what you mean. By the way, George, your heart does not seem to trouble you much, just at present.'

'Why should it? I sometimes wish it would, in the right direction.'

'You have your choice now, George—you have your choice, now, of the whole female population of the globe—'

'Of all the girls beside the water, From Janeiro to Gibraltar,' as the old song says,' laughed George.

'Precisely so. You can have any of them for the asking. Money is a great power, my boy, a great power. You must be careful how you use it.'

'I shall not use it. I shall give it all to you to spend because it will amuse you, and I will go on writing books because that is the only thing I can do approximately well. Do you know, I believe I shall be ridiculous in the character of the rich man?'

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

THREE years later George Wood was sitting alone on a winter's afternoon in the library where Thomas Craik had once given him his views on life in general and on ambition in particular. It was already almost dark, for the days were very short, and two lamps shed a soft light from above upon the broad polished table.

The man's face had changed during the years that had passed since he had found himself free from his engagement to marry his cousin. The angular head had grown more massive, the shadows about the eyes and temples had deepened, the complexion was paler and less youthful, the expression more determined than ever, and yet more kind and less scornful. In those years he had seen much and had accomplished much, and he had learned to know at last what it meant to feel with the heart, instead of with the sensibilities, human or artistic. His money had not spoiled him. On the contrary, the absence of all preoccupations in the

matter of his material welfare had left the man himself free to think, to act, and to feel according to his natural instincts.

At the present moment he was absorbed in thought. The familiar sheet of paper lay before him, and he held his pen in his hand, but the point had long been dry, and had long ceased to move over the smooth surface. There was a number at the top of the page, and a dozen lines had been written, continuing a conversation that had gone before. But the imaginary person had broken off in the middle of his saying, and in the theatre of the writer's fancy the stage of his own life had suddenly appeared, and his own self was among the players, acting the acts and speaking the speeches of long ago, while the owner of the old self watched and listened to the piece with fascinated interest, commenting critically upon what passed before his eyes, and upon the words that rang through the waking dream. The habit of expression was so strong that his own thoughts took shape as though he were writing them down.

'They have played the parts of the three fates in my life,' he said to himself. 'Constance was my Clotho, Mamie was my Lachesis, Grace is my Atropos. I was not so heartless in those first days as I have sometimes fancied that I was. I loved my Clotho, after a young fashion. She took me out of darkness and chaos and made me an active, real being. When I see how wretchedly unhappy I used to be, and when I think how she first showed me that I was able to do something in the world, it does not seem strange that I should have worshipped her as a sort of goddess. If things had gone otherwise, if she had taken me instead of refusing me on that first of May, if I had married her, we might have been very happy together, for a time, perhaps for always. But we were unlike in the wrong way; our points of difference did not complement each other. She has married Dr. Drinkwater, the Reverend Doctor Drinkwater, a good man twenty years older than herself, and she seems perfectly contented. The test of fitness lies in reversing the order of events. If to-day her good husband were to die, could I take his place in her love or estimation? Certainly not. If Grace had married the clergyman, could Constance have been to me what Grace is? Could I have loved her as I love this woman who will never love me? Assuredly not; the thing is impossible. I loved Constance with one half of myself, and as far as I went I was in earnest. Perhaps it was the higher, more intellectual part of me, for I did not love her because she was a woman, but because she was unlike all other

women—in other words, a sort of angel. Angels may have loved women in the days of the giants, but no man can love an angel as a woman ought to be loved. As for me, my ears are wearied by too much angelic music, the harmonies are too thin and delicate, the notes lack character, the melodies all end in one close. I used to think that there was no such thing as friendship. I have changed my mind. Constance is a very good friend to me, and I to her, though neither of us can understand the other's life any longer, as we understood each other when she took up the distaff of my life and first set the spindle whirling.

‘Was I heartless with poor Mamie? I suppose I was, because I made her believe for a while that I loved her. Let us be honest. I felt something—I made myself believe that I felt something which was like love. It was of the baser kind. It was the temptation of the eye, the fascination of a magnetic vitality, the flattery of my vanity in seeing myself so loved. I lived for months in an enchanted palace, in an enchanted garden, where she was the enchantress. Everything contributed to awaken in me the joy of mere life, the belief that reality was better than romance, and that, in love, it was better to receive than to give. I was like a man in a badly conceived novel, with whom everything rests on a false basis, in which the scenery is false, the passion is false, and the belief in the future is most false of all. And how commonplace it all seems, as I look back upon it! I do not remember to have once felt a pain like a knife just under the heart, in all that time, though my blood ran fast enough sometimes. And it all went on so smoothly as Lachesis let the thread spin through her pretty fingers. Who would have believed that a man could be at once so fooled and so loved? I was sorry that I could not love her, even after we knew all that her mother had done. I remember that I began a book on that very day. Heartless of me, was it not? If she had been Grace I should never have written again. But she was only Lachesis; the thread turned under her hand, and spun on in spite of her, and in spite of itself—to its end.

‘Grace is the end. There can be no loving after this. My father tells me that I am working too hard and that I am growing prematurely old. It is not the work that does it. It is something that wears out the life from the core. And yet I would not be without it. There is that thrust again, that says I am not deceiving myself. Grace holds the thread, and will neither cut it nor let it run on through her fingers. Heaven knows, I am not

a sentimental man! But for the physical pain I feel when I think of losing her, I should laugh at myself and let her slip down to the middle distance of other memories, not quite out of sight, nor yet quite out of mind, but wholly out of my heart. I have tried it many a time, but the trouble grows instead of wearing out. I have tried wandering about the earth in most known and unknown directions. It never did me any good. I wonder whether she knows! After all it will be four years next summer since poor John Bond was drowned, and everybody says she has forgotten him. But she is not a woman who forgets, any more than she is one to waste her life in a perpetual mourning. To speak may be to cut the thread. That would be the end, indeed! I should see her after that, of course, but it would never be the same again. She would know my secret then and all would be over—the hours together, the talks, the touch of hands that means so much to me and so little to her. And yet, to know—to know at last the end of it all—and the great “perhaps,” the great “if”—if she should! But there is no “perhaps,” and there can be no “if.” She is my fate, and it is my fate that there should be no end to this, but the end of life itself. Better so. Better to have loved ever so unhappily, than to have been married to any of the Constances or the Mamies of this world! Heigho! I suppose people think that there is nothing I cannot have for my money! Nothing? There is all that could make life worth living, and which millions cannot buy!’

The curtain fell before the little stage, and the eyes of the lonely man closed with an expression of intense pain, as he let his forehead rest in the palm of his hand.

THE END.

## *A Paris Correspondent of 1753.*

**D**ID you ever read Grimm?’

‘Yes, of course; I used to read nothing else when I was a child.’

‘I don’t mean the fairy-tale Grimm.’

‘Oh! the man who invented that tiresome “Law”? No; I hate philology.’

‘That was the same Grimm. I didn’t refer to him, but to the friend of Diderot and the Abbé Galiani, and all those people.’

‘What! the person who wrote those seventeen volumes of “Correspondence” that you see, uncut, on the top shelf of every public library? Good gracious, no; certainly not. Life isn’t long enough.’

Such a conversation would almost surely ensue at any mention of the name ‘Grimm,’ even among comparatively well-read people—people who have pored excitedly over Gibbon, and have not quailed before the ten stout volumes of Milman’s ‘Latin Christianity’; people who may possibly have entertained ideas of reading Saint-Simon from end to end! Literature has nothing more fascinating to offer than the portrait-gallery of that faithful observer, yet the pages of Frédéric Melchior Grimm are no less graphic, and deal with an infinitely wider range of subjects.

Grimm was not a Frenchman by nationality, though his name has become identified with Paris and the Encyclopædists. He was born at Ratisbon in 1726 (the same year as Madame d’Epinay), and, in spite of the poverty and obscurity of his parents, he managed to obtain a good and solid education. Like other young enthusiasts with a turn for writing, he first tried his hand at plays; but these were a total failure, and he was glad to accept the post of tutor to the children of the Comte de Schomberg, with whom he came to Paris. He does not, however, appear to have kept this situation long, and we next hear of him as reader to the Duke of

Saxe-Gotha. It was at this period of his career that he met Rousseau (who was drawn to him by their mutual love of music), and by Rousseau was introduced to Raynal, the Baron d'Holbach, and, above all, to Diderot. His relations with Rousseau ended as people's relations with Rousseau generally did end. There is no variety in the history of Rousseau's attachments, but the devotion that sprang up between Grimm and Diderot remained uninterrupted all their lives long. 'Si je me plaignais de mon sort, la Providence aurait le droit de me répondre, "Je t'ai donné Grimm pour ami,"' writes Diderot on one occasion. Their minds were cast in much the same mould, though Diderot's was certainly the master, and their interests lay in the same directions. One most uncommon talent they had alike, and that was the power of describing a picture so as to convey a vivid notion of its scheme and of its charm. When we read the modern descriptions of our galleries, and examine ourselves as to the impression produced by the elaborate accounts of the works of art exhibited, we shall be able to rate this gift at its true value.

It was during Grimm's appointment as 'Secrétaire des Commandements de M. le Duc d'Orléans' (1753) that he began an interchange of letters with the German princes, and especially with the Duke of Saxe-Gotha. Gradually the Empress of Russia, the Queen of Sweden, and the King of Poland (Stanislas Leczinski)—an imposing array of correspondents—were in communication with this obscure young man of twenty-seven! But for some reason or other it was the Empress Catherine II. with whom he seems to have been on terms of the most real intimacy, and by her he was nominated Minister in the States of Lower Saxony (1795), an appointment in which he was confirmed by the Emperor Paul. Besides Catherine, the Duke of Saxe-Gotha always stood Grimm's friend. He made him Minister of Saxe-Gotha at the court of France in 1776, and Grimm held this office till the Revolution broke out, when he retired to Saxe-Gotha, where he died in 1807. While he enjoyed these diplomatic offices, Grimm's real business was to act as Paris Correspondent of her Muscovite Majesty, and of other royal persons. What the London Correspondent of provincial papers does now for the readers of country journals, Grimm did, with infinitely more accurate information, and with a pen far more learned and brilliant, for the entertainment of a few crowned heads. The talk of the town, of the *tout Paris*, talk on music, the drama, society, and, above all, on literature, furnished his topics.



In reading Grimm's 'Correspondance Littéraire' every English person will be struck by two facts: first, by Grimm's intimate knowledge of English literature (and particularly of contemporary books); and second, by the mania that existed in Paris for English books and plays for more than fifty years—in fact, till the outbreak of the Revolution. On the whole, it may be said that Grimm's judgments were singularly impartial, for though his prejudices were strong, he was unusually ready to be convinced (as in the cases of Glück and Clairon, for example), and he always had the courage of his opinions. So, it may be added, had his chief correspondent, Catherine II., to whom this charming *pot-pourri* of historical, literary, musical, artistic, theatrical, and social gossip was principally addressed, and who must have counted the hours before the arrival of this delightful *courrier*. What was there that Grimm did not know, and about which he could not write interestingly? But among the 9,000 pages (roughly speaking) which are the sum of his seventeen volumes, none are more acute and more absorbing than those which he devotes to the English publications of the day.

'The English,' he says (1763), in a conversation with a certain marquise who had been holding up to admiration a long-winded and involved romance called 'Les Mémoires de Madame la Baronne de Blémont'—'the English have left us far behind them in the matter of fiction. I would rather have written that novel of "Amelia,"<sup>1</sup> translated into French six months ago, than almost any French novel I know. . . . Of course hardly anyone has read it, which does not prevent the women from abusing it violently. Yet the characters in this book resemble closely the people we meet in daily life. They have none of that false gloss which we in France are accustomed to daub over all our romances, as well as over all our plays. You have only to read the conversation about the duel between Dr. Harrison and Colonel James, and you will see what a difference there is between a man who really knows how to make his characters talk naturally, and a person like Rousseau, who merely interpolates a dissertation on the sin of duelling into the "Nouvelle Héloïse." The fact is, Fielding is a genius, while Rousseau is nothing but a writer.'

To this sweeping accusation the Marquise retorts with reason that she gives up 'that *béguéule* Julie,' with her noble sentiments and her pedantic tutor, but that Richardson (whom Grimm adores) is as emphatic as Rousseau, and that Sir Charles Grandison,

<sup>1</sup> Fielding's.

in his remarks about duelling, swaggers quite as much as any of Rousseau's characters.

Even Grimm is constrained to admit that the incomparable Sir Charles is too great a talker, and has an unfortunate tendency to point a moral on every possible occasion. He would have preferred him to be more silent and more simple, and is indignant at his success. But for all that, he complains that in the '*Nouvelle Héloïse*' everybody talks Rousseau, while it is the essence of a novel that the author should 'lie low.' Again and again he turns to his favourite English romances as the types of what works of fiction ought to be, and it is seldom indeed that he does not at once seize on their strong points in a manner that is certainly unusual when books are only read in translations. Of '*Clarissa*,' which was translated soon after it came out, and ten years before he expressed himself so vigorously to the Marquise, Grimm declares that it 'bristles with genius,' and that every character, whether speaking or writing, has a touch of his own, and resembles in nothing the manner of anyone else.

This difference between English fiction and the ponderous, unreal romances in which French fine ladies and gentlemen had hitherto taken such pleasure (for the purely domestic novel was then unknown in France<sup>1</sup>) is attributed by Grimm to the fact that in England people had the courage to be individual, and to develop themselves in their own way. In France, on the contrary, everyone tried to live up to the standard of the *homme du monde*. 'One may spend hours with a dozen different persons,' exclaims Grimm in disgust, 'and they all say the same things in the same tone.' It was considered low and ill-bred to differ from your surroundings, therefore the artificiality which was the key-stone of French life became also the keynote of French fiction.

Perhaps the French felt this. They may have got tired of their perpetual stilts, and longed to divert themselves after a simpler manner. At all events, translations from the English became the rage among people without the taste for omnivorous reading that marked Grimm and the Encyclopædists. Sterne's books were widely read (though, curiously enough, Grimm says nothing about them), and several of the great English classics—notably '*Tom Jones*,' '*Clarissa*,' and (later) '*Cecilia*'—were not only translated, but also adapted and transferred to the stage, for which they were mostly quite unfitted.

<sup>1</sup> *Le Roman Bourgeois* of Furetière may be cited as an exception. But the somewhat Thackerayan manner of Furetière was never popular, and his editions were few indeed.

It cannot be said that the French public were hard to please. It was not necessary to give them Richardson—the equal, according to Grimm, of Homer and Sophocles—nor the ‘great and original artist Fielding,’ nor ‘Dublin’s immortal Dean, the sublime Swift, one single shaft of whose wit outweighs whole volumes of didactic writers.’ No doubt they read the Abbé Prévost’s translation—a good deal cut down—of ‘Sir Charles Grandison,’ and peeped into the pages of ‘Jonathan Wild,’ but for the most part they were content with simpler fare. The ‘Histoire de Miss Betty Fatless,’ in four vols., translated from the English, had a wide popularity, and, according to Grimm, deserved it. Miss Betty seems to have been a kind of earlier Evelina, whose carelessness and inexperience led her into all sorts of false positions; and her story was told, says Grimm, in a simple but spirited style.

Readers of the old literature will at once jump to the conclusion that the history of Miss Betty Fatless was really the adventures of one ‘Betty Careless,’ a novel of some repute, by Fielding’s sister. Certainly Miss Betty’s popularity was so great that three years later (1757) we find Mme. Riccoboni, an actress at the Comédie Italienne, and a woman of considerable gifts for writing, publishing two tales in letters, a form which was now becoming highly fashionable. Both tales had English titles and affected to deal with English life. We are told, but on no specific authority, that Miss Fanny Butler, the heroine of the first, was a real woman; though the other two ladies, whose correspondence forms the second story—Milady Juliette Catesby and Milady Henriette Campley (Campbell?)—are admitted to have no prototypes in fact. Mme. Riccoboni seems to have been more distinguished as a writer than as an actress. Her style was rapid and concise, full of grace and distinction and Grimm seldom mentions her without a little friendly pat.

Novels, however, were not the only branch of literature that was eagerly read and translated. In March 1754 Grimm speaks of an edition of Bolingbroke’s ‘Memoirs’ that has been done into French, and praises the book highly. It is curious that the qualities in the author which he selects for commendation are not precisely those we have been accustomed to think the marked characteristics of the brilliant Bolingbroke. ‘Versatile,’ ‘ingenious,’ and ‘fascinating’ are the epithets that follow naturally on his name, but one would not have instinctively described him as ‘frank, impartial, and trustworthy’; neither would one have referred to ‘the integrity of a man as respectable as Bolingbroke.’ But it

says a great deal for Bolingbroke's talents that he was able to impose upon Grimm.

History had a strong attraction for the more thoughtful members of French society, who doubtless agreed with Grimm that 'a great historian is the rarest of beings.' With the exception of De Thou, such a writer is wholly lacking in France. The reason, he says, that makes the French incapable of writing history, is the same reason that makes their memoirs the most interesting in the world. They float on the surface of things, and are neither deep enough nor philosophic enough to divine hidden causes. Even Voltaire had nothing to do in that *galère*, fond though he was of trying it. Peter the Great was a character beyond his comprehension, as indeed was not unnatural. Voltaire's lightness of touch and facility of expression proved his snare, and are out of place in the stern realities of history. These qualities had nothing in common with the sweeping reforms of Peter the Great, though they are appropriate enough to the narrative of Charles XII.'s meteor-like career; and the history of that dazzling and futile monarch is in consequence Voltaire's best bit of historical work.

So, not having any historians of their own (this was before the days of Michelet), the French turned with ardour to those of other countries, and particularly to England. Hume, in a yellow velvet coat with black butterflies on it, was a familiar figure in the Paris of Rousseau, and his English History was translated and widely read, especially his 'House of Stuart,'<sup>1</sup> which fell into the capable hands of the Abbé Prévost, author of 'Manon Lescaut.' The 'House of Tudor'<sup>1</sup> fared rather ill at those of Mme. Belot, but, on the whole, Hume cannot complain of want of appreciation in France. Robertson's 'History of Scotland' was translated by the indefatigable M. de la Chapelle in 1764, and Smollett's history appeared in 1768, but found no favour in the eyes of Grimm, who observed that the 'author was a contemptible person, with no weapon but satire, which he used freely to gain readers for his book.' This is hard on the historian of Humphrey Clinker and the poet of 'The Tears of Scotland.' Boswell can boast of his admirers, for his 'Memoirs of Paoli' and his 'Visit to Corsica' both excited considerable interest, and literary men were beginning to attract attention in their own persons, as well as in their works. A life of Savage the poet (translated by Le Tourneur) was followed shortly after by one of Thomson; we are not told how this was received, but there does not seem *à priori* any

<sup>1</sup> Parts of the history dealing with those subjects.

intrinsic probability that the Parisian public would be violently excited by Thomson's history. In 1763 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's correspondence was translated and published in Holland, and, strange to say, fell flat in Paris. One can only suppose a foreign language has much to answer for, or perhaps the translation was bad. Assuredly Grimm's judgment of literary ladies seems less sound than most of his verdicts, as we find him twenty-five years later (1788) gushing over Lady Craven's letters to her son, and declaring that incarnation of vanity and selfishness to be 'a superior woman and enlightened mother, endowed with the happiest instincts and most delicate feelings.' English readers of the effusions of the 'Princess Berkeley' will be of another opinion.

So much for the novels and histories; but, long as the list is, it by no means exhausts the field of French enterprise. English plays and English *motifs* are all the rage, though they have to be considerably chastened and toned down to suit the French ideas. Recalling the awful tone of voice in which English matrons nowadays will inquire if 'you *really* like French plays,' and unhesitatingly condemn anything they consider improper with the phrase, 'It is so very—well—*French*,' it is rather amusing to find that in the Paris of 1763 it was necessary to modify the *dénouement* of Thomson's play—*Thomson's* 'Tancred and Sigismunda' (translated and adapted under the title of 'Blanche et Guiscard')—because no French audience would tolerate the sight of a heroine being murdered in her *bed*, or of her father rushing across the stage in his night-shirt. After this, we are not surprised at Grimm's writing in April 1789, two months before the taking of the Bastille, that in 'L'Homme à Sentiment' (adapted from the 'School for Scandal,' and played at the Comédie Italienne) some of the scenes had to be omitted, because 'the license of the English stage permits the successful representation of events which would be repugnant to the code of morals that governs the theatre in France. . . . You may see on the boards any day a crowd of damsels, some of whom are passionately in love, others simply heartless coquettes, others, again, playing off the lover against another for their own purposes; but as for a *married woman* behaving after the manner of Lady Teazle—such a scandal would be absolutely impossible on the French stage.' These remarks are sufficiently startling in the ears of people accustomed to the *fin de siècle* style of French plays. But the reason given by Grimm for this excessive propriety is stranger still. 'In France,' he goes on to say, 'women influence the tone of society



to a much greater degree than in any other country, and in proportion as they become debased and corrupt, *we* grow more severe, and are more critical of anything approaching to indecency on the boards. Indeed, it may be doubted whether in these days "Tartuffe" itself would ever have been tolerated by the public.' (Pt. 3, vol. v. p. 95). On reading this passage there came to one's mind the verdict of a learned professor, who, when discussing the always interesting though well-worn subject as to how far French novels in any way represent French life, gave utterance to views which may be summed up briefly in the axiom 'that the morality of the French nation was in inverse proportion to the immorality of its literature.' One laughed at the time on hearing this remark, but then one had not read Grimm. Now, one is inclined to think that the converse of this proposition may be true.

In the light of these observations it may be imagined how the grossness of Wycherley and Congreve would strike the dwellers in the whited sepulchre of the Paris of Louis XV. Yet here and there we find notices of Restoration plays being adapted and 'cut' for the French stage, though one might have thought that when all the necessary pruning was done, nothing of the original would be left. And perhaps nothing was! The industrious M. de la Place, whose aspirations were superior to his talents, devoted many years to issuing translations of the series known as the 'English Theatre,' and poor though the work undoubtedly was, it probably proved a mine of gold for French playwrights to dip into. It was in 1763 that M. de la Harpe had the happy thought of writing a tragedy of 'Warwick,' in which the hero was in love with Elizabeth Woodville. We learn that this flight of the imagination was a 'most brilliant success,' and would probably have a run of 'at least fifteen days, which is at present an almost unheard-of triumph.' As to whether it had or not, readers of Grimm are left in the dark, for it is never mentioned again; but, five years later, the production at the Français of a stupid and dismal play called 'Beverley,' in which the gambling hero commits suicide in prison, gives rise to some rather *naïf* and amusing observations on the part of Grimm. 'I hardly think,' he says, 'that a suicide can *à priori* be interesting as a subject for the stage. It is, in reality, neither praiseworthy nor pathetic. I see nothing in it but one miscreant less in the world, and I dismiss him from my mind.'

But if Grimm is naturally bored with the elaborate gloom of the 'unborn' tragedian, his enthusiasm over real genius knows no



bounds. Twelve years before 'Beverley' appeared to darken existence, we find him alluding in glowing terms to Gay's 'Beggars Opera.' 'You are in the worst company in the world,' he exclaims, 'and you never want to be out of it, as nothing can be more original or more diverting. You have only to compare it with French comic operas to see how wholly lacking the French are in truth and spontaneity; and, indeed, we cannot help allowing that, in the matter of plays, the English are our masters. The one idea of our authors is to draw portraits and make epigrams. The sparkle of their wit is the glitter of an icicle, and the weariness their plays produce is all the greater for the false air of gaiety which pervades them, and which renders attention nothing less than a conscious effort of will.'

Meanwhile, popular as other branches of our literature were, our poetry had many votaries. Even 'Hudibras' is appreciated as a 'work of genius' by those that have eyes to see and ears to hear, though naturally, 'from its local colour and its endless allusions, it is difficult for a foreigner to understand and still more difficult for him to translate.' It is hardly surprising to find that Thomson's 'Seasons' (1760) were a failure, and we are more astonished at two people attempting to render into French Young's 'Night Thoughts' (1769-1770) than at Grimm's comment that 'you must have a great passion for gloom before you can get through this book without being sensible both of fatigue and disgust.'

Many of the names that we have noticed cause one a thrill of amazement, so much out of place do they seem among that company of wits and triflers which formed the Paris of the last days of the Monarchy. But there is one Englishman who would most emphatically have been *en pays de connaissance* amongst the most punctilious members of the French Court, and that man was Chesterfield. As might have been expected, he had both his admirers and his 'imitators,' and this epithet is an elastic one, capable of meaning little or much. The little book called 'The Art of the Toilette,' which appeared in 1776, contains sentiments after Chesterfield's own heart, even if they do not emanate directly from his pen, and Grimm's comments upon female beauty and attire are as worthy of attention as his comments on everything else. How many women would barter much of their worldly goods, perhaps much of their solid happiness, to be immortalised as perfect mistresses of the science of dress! Yet more might earn the right to such praise if they would only have the sense to act

on the principle laid down by La Rochefoucauld, to which Grimm refers in a compliment which would be spoilt by translation into our clumsy English. 'Toutes les femmes,' says Grimm, quoting from La Rochefoucauld, 'se mettent comme la veille;' and adds on his own account, 'il n'y a que Mme Geoffrin qui se soit toujours mise comme le lendemain.'

With this tribute to Grimm's 'universality' we take leave of him, but one or two questions force themselves upon us from the facts we have been contemplating. When we reflect that one hundred and fifty years ago the French were the pruders and the English were the profligates; that the English took Nature for their model in both novels and plays, while the French shut their eyes to the weaknesses and sins of which everyone was aware and all practised, but which it was considered proper to ignore; when we compare our playwrights Bowdlerising and adapting French dramas with Dryden deliberately performing the opposite function for Molière, and listen to the aspirations of some of our modern authors after a school of 'Naturalism' as audacious as the French, we ask ourselves—Is there such a thing as national character at all, or is everything a mere fashion and a conventionality? The Anglomania ceased abruptly with the Revolution, the rôles were inverted, the sides were changed. They envied us our liberty, and sought to attain it by the September massacres; they admired 'Hamlet' and produced 'Hernani'; they worshipped 'Clarissa,' and created 'L'Assommoir.'

L. B. L.

## *Fairy Gold.*

I HAVE so sweet a song to sing  
 That, could I voice it forth aright,  
 The world would thrill with wild delight,  
 As at the coming of the Spring.

There is a music in my brain  
 Which leaps and throbs the whole day long ;  
 Now poised upon the brink of song,  
 Yet ever falling back again.

I have a tale so strange to tell  
 That, could I shape it into words,  
 The music of the summer-birds  
 Would silent fall beneath its spell.

And sometimes in a dream there comes,  
 To heart and tongue, the living fire,  
 And all the hosts of my desire  
 Sweep forth with trumpets and with drums ;

With silver bugle-notes, and gleam  
 Of gay, plumed squadrons forward hurled,  
 To bear through all the wakening world  
 The joy and beauty of my dream.

All that my heart in dreams achieves  
 The Fates, relentless, still withhold,  
 And whirl my store of Fairy gold  
 At breath of dawn to withered leaves.

DUNCAN ROBERTSON.

## *Kenyon's Innings.*

### I.

KENYON had been more unmanageable than usual. Unsettled and excitable from the moment he awoke and remembered who was coming in the evening, he had remained in an unsafe state all day. That evening found him with unbroken bones was a miracle to Ethel, his sister, and to his great friend John, the under-gardener. Poor Ethel was in charge; and sole charge of Kenyon, who was eleven, was no light matter for a girl with her hair still down. Her brother was a handful at most times; to-day he would have filled some pairs of stronger hands than Ethel's. They had begun the morning together, with small cricket (snob-cricket, Kenyon called it); but Kenyon had been rather rude over it, and Ethel had retired. She soon regretted this step; it had made him reckless; he had spent the most dangerous day. Kenyon delighted in danger. He got it by walking round the entire premises on the garden wall, which was high enough to kill him if he fell, and by clambering over the greenhouses, which offered a still more fascinating risk. He not only had done both this morning, but had gone so far as to straddle a gable of the house itself, shouting down good-tempered insults to Ethel, who appealed to him with tears and entreaties from the lawn below. Ethel had been quite disabled from sitting at meat with him; and in the afternoon he had bothered the gardeners, in the potting-shed, to such an extent that his friend John had subsequently refused to bowl to him. In fact, Kenyon Harwood had been a public nuisance all day, though a lovable one—at his very worst he was that. He had lovable looks for one thing, and it was not the only thing. The boy had run wild since his young mother's death. There were reasons why he should not go to school, at present. There were reasons why he should spend the long summer days in the sun-

shine, and open only the books he cared for; though his taste here was fantastic, certainly. He had dark, laughing eyes, and a face of astonishing brightness and health; astonishing because his legs and arms were as thin as pipe-stems, and looked as brittle. Kenyon was indeed a most delicate boy. He was small and delicate and weak in everything but spirit. 'He has the spirit,' said John, his friend, 'of the deuce and all!'

Ethel forgave easily, too easily almost; but then she was Kenyon's devoted slave, who cried about him half the night, and lived for him, and longed to die for him. Kenyon had toned himself down by tea-time, and when he sought her then as though nothing had happened, she was only too delighted to catch his spirit. Had she reminded him of his behaviour on the roof, and elsewhere, he would have been very sorry and affectionate; but it was not her way to make him sorry. She listened to him in the nicest way; and he had plenty to say, for it was a great occasion; it was this which had unsettled and excited him. The day was to have a great ending, and now that this was very near, Kenyon was actually a little awed; Ethel must have felt thankful indeed. They had the most sober tea together; they never dined with their father; they seldom listened for his chariot wheels as they were listening to-night. The boy, especially, took but little delight in his father's return from the works, though he often awaited that event with a painful interest. But to-night Mr. Harwood was to bring back with him one of his boy's heroes, whom Kenyon was to shake by the hand—one of the heroes of his favourite book, which was not a story-book. It has been said that Kenyon's literary taste was peculiar; his favourite book was *Lillywhite's Cricketers' Guide*; the name of the great young man who was coming this evening had figured prominently in recent volumes of *Lillywhite*, and Kenyon knew every score he had ever made.

'Of course he won't take much notice of a kid like me,' said Kenyon, with a modesty which was not always so conspicuous in him, 'but I *should* like to talk to him, I should so! Fancy having C. J. Forrester to stay here! Do you know, I've an idea the governor asked him partly to please *me*, though he says he's a sort of relation. I say, I wish we'd known that before, don't you? Anyhow it's the jolliest thing the governor ever did in his life, and a wonder he did it, seeing he only laughs at cricket. I wish he'd been a cricketer himself, then he'd kick up less row about the glass; but thank goodness I haven't broken any to-day. I

'say, I wish C. J. Forrester 'd made more runs yesterday ; he may be riled, you know !'

Kenyon had not picked up all his pretty expressions in the potting-shed ; he was intimate with a boy who went to a public school.

'How many did he get ?' Ethel asked.

'Duck and seven. I expect he'll be pretty sick about it !'

'I shouldn't be surprised if he thinks far less about it than you do, Ken. It's only a game ; I don't suppose he'll mind so very much.'

'Won't he, then ? It's only about the swaggerest county match of the season !' cried Kenyon, very sarcastically. 'He's bound to mind not coming off against Notts. The *Sportsman* says he was out to a weak stroke, too, second innings. Where did I see the *Sportsman* ? Oh, John and I are getting it from the town every day ; we're going halves ; it comes to John, though, so you needn't say anything. What *are* you grinning at, Ethel ? Ah, you're not up in real cricket. You only understand snob.'

Kenyon was more experienced. The public school boy hard by had given him an innings or two at his net, where Kenyon had picked up more than the rudiments of the game and a passion for *Lillywhite*. He had learnt there his pretty expressions, which were anything but popular at home. Mr. Harwood was a man of limited patience, and a still more limited knowledge of boys. He frightened Kenyon, who was at his worst in the paternal presence. He was a sensitive man, of uncertain temper, who could not get on with his children ; though Ethel was a dear good girl to him. He saw very little of either of them. It was a trouble, an unacknowledged grief, to hard, lonely Mr. Harwood. But it was his own fault ; he knew this ; he knew all about it. He knew too much of himself, and not enough of his children.

You could not blame Kenyon—Mr. Harwood would have been the last to do so—yet it was dreadful to see him looking forward to his father's return, for the first time in his life, perhaps, and now only for the sake of the stranger he was bringing with him ; to see him peering through the blind at this stranger, who certainly had great interest in his eyes, without so much as glancing at his father or realising that he was there ; to hear him talking volubly in the drawing-room after dinner (when the children came down) to the celebrated C. J. Forrester, whom he had never seen before ; and to remember how very little he ever had to say to



his father. Ethel felt it—all. She was very kind to her father this evening. That peculiar man may have felt it too, and the root of Ethel's attentions into the bargain; for he was very snubbing to her. He never showed much feeling. Yet it *was* to please Kenyon that Mr. Harwood had pressed Forrester to look him up, and not by any means (though this had been his way of putting it to his kinsman, whom he knew very slightly) to cheer his own loneliness.

The cricketer was a blonde young man, disappointingly free from personal lustre, and chiefly remarkable for his hands. He had an enormous hand, and when it closed, like jaws, over Kenyon's little one, this suffering student could well understand his *Lillywhite* characterising C. J. Forrester as 'a grand field, especially in the country.' They talked cricket together from the first moment, and until Kenyon said good-night. He told Ethel, afterwards, that so far they had got no further than the late match against Notts; that Forrester had described it 'as if he'd only *seen* the thing;' and that she was quite right, and C. J. was far less cut up at the result than he was. The county had been beaten by Nottingham, and Kenyon went so far as to affirm that C. J. Forrester's disappointing form had directly contributed to the disaster, and that he certainly *ought* to be ashamed of himself. But this was a little bit of after bravado displayed upstairs, and in the midst of the most enthusiastic utterances respecting C. J.

Mr. Harwood watched and heard the frank, free, immediate intercourse between Kenyon and the visitor. He had never known Kenyon so bright and animated—so handsome even. The boy was at his best, and his best was a revelation to Mr. Harwood, who had never in his life had a real conversation with Kenyon such as Forrester was having now. He had talked to Kenyon, certainly; but any father can do that. As he sat grimly listening, with Ethel snubbed to silence, he may have felt a jealous longing to be his small son's friend too—to interest him, as this complete stranger was doing, and be honestly interested—to love and be loved. He was self-conscious enough to feel all this, and even to smile, as he rose to look at the clock, and saw in the mirror behind it no trace of his feelings in his thin-lipped, whiskered face. At nine the children said good night, of their own accord, knowing better than to stay a minute over their time. Mr. Harwood kissed them as coldly and lightly as usual; but surprised them with a pleasantry before they left the room.

'Wait, Kenyon. Forrester, ask him your average. He'll tell

you to a decimal. He knows what he calls his *Lillywhite* by heart.'

Kenyon looked extremely eager, though Mr. Harwood's tone struck Forrester as a little sarcastic.

'You've been learning it up!' the cricketer said knowingly to Kenyon.

'I haven't,' declared Kenyon, bubbling over with excitement.

'You needn't ask him your own,' Ethel added, quite entering into it. 'He knows them all.'

'Oh, we'll have mine,' said Forrester, who felt slightly ridiculous, but very much amused. 'What was it for the 'Varsity—my first year?'

Kenyon had to think. That was two years ago, before he had known much about cricket; but he had read up that year's *Lillywhite*—he read as many old *Lillywhites* as he could get—and he answered in a few moments:

'Nineteen point seven.'

'You *have* been getting it up!' cried Forrester.

Kenyon was beaming. 'No, I haven't—honestly I haven't! Ask Ethel!'

'Oh, it's genuine enough,' said Mr. Harwood to Forrester; 'it's his accomplishment—one to be proud of, isn't it? That'll do, Kenyon; good night, both of you.'

The door closed.

'*He's* one to be proud of,' said Forrester, pointedly, a vague indignation rising within him. 'A ripping little chap, I call him. And he *was* right to a decimal. I never heard of such a fellow!'

'He's cricket mad,' said Mr. Harwood, dryly. 'I'm glad you like him.'

'I like him immensely. I like his enthusiasm. I never saw a small boy so keen! Does he play?'

'Not properly; he's not fit to; he's very delicate. No, it's mostly theory with Kenyon; and I'm very much afraid he'll bore you. You mustn't let him. Indeed, I fear you'll have a slow time all round; but, as I told you, there's a horse to ride whenever you want him.'

'Does the boy ride?'

'He's not allowed to. I was going on to say that we have a very respectable club in the town, where I can tuck you up and make you comfortable any time you like to come down. Only don't, for your own sake, encourage Kenyon to be a nuisance; he doesn't require much encouragement.'

'My dear sir, we're too keen cricketers to bore each other; we're going to be tremendous friends. You don't mean to say he bores *you*? Ah, with the scores, perhaps; but you must be awfully proud of having such a jolly little beggar; I know *I* should be! I'd make a cricketer of him. If he's as keen as this now, in a few years' time he ought——'

'Do you smoke, Forrester? We will go into the other room.'

Mr. Harwood had turned abruptly away, and was putting out the lights.

## II.

LONG before breakfast next morning—while the lawns were yet frosted with dew and lustrous in the level sunlight—Kenyon Harwood and C. J. Forrester, the well-known cricketer, met and fraternised. Kenyon and John had always spoken of Forrester as 'C. J.'; and when Kenyon let this out, it was arranged, chiefly by C. J. himself, who was amused and pleased, that Kenyon should never call him anything else. Mr. Harwood, at breakfast, rather disapproved of the arrangement, but it was hardly a matter for the paternal ukase. Meanwhile Kenyon had personally conducted C. J. round the place, and had most impressively introduced him (in the potting-shed) to John, who looked so proud and delighted as to put a head even on Kenyon's delight and pride. C. J. was charmed with John; but he was less enthusiastic about a bricked quadrangle, in front of the gardener's and coachman's cottages, with wickets painted on a buttress, where Kenyon was constantly indulging in small cricket—notably in the dinner-hour of John, who bolted his food to come out and bowl to him. The skilled opinion of C. J. was not in favour of 'snob,' as played by Kenyon with a racket and soft ball.

'He says a tennis racket is bad for you,' Ethel understood from Kenyon (to whom it was a very serious thing); 'makes you play with a crooked bat, and teaches you to spoon. So there's an end to snob! But what do you think? He's going to take me into the town to choose a decent bat; and we're going in for regular practice on the far lawn—John and all—if the governor lets us! C. J.'s going to coach me. Think of being coached by C. J. Forrester!'

'Father is sure to let you,' said Ethel; and certainly Mr. Harwood did not say no; but his consent was coldly given, and one thing he stipulated almost sternly.

'I won't have Kenyon run. I shall put a stop to it if he does. It might kill him.'

'Ah, he has told me about that.' Forrester added, simply, 'I am so sorry!'

Kenyon, in fact, in explaining the system of scoring at snob—a most ingenious system—had said :

'You see, I mayn't run my runs. I know the boundaries don't make half such a good game, but I can't help it. What's wrong? I'm sure I can't tell you. I've been to heaps of doctors, but they never say much to *me*; they just mess about, and then send you back to the room where you look at the papers. Mother used to take me to London on purpose, and the governor's done so twice. It's my hip, or some rot. It's a jolly nuisance, for it feels all right, and I'm positive I *could* run, and ride, and go to school. Blow the doctors!'

'But obey them,' C. J. had said, seriously; 'you should go in for obeying orders, Kenyon.'

They got the bat. It was used a great deal during those few days—the too few days of C. J.'s visit; and was permitted to repose in C. J.'s cricket-bag, cheek by jowl with bruised veterans that had served with honour at Lord's and the Oval. Kenyon was very mindful of those services, and handled the big bats even more reverently than he shook his hero's hand. They lent themselves to this sort of thing more readily than C. J. did. I am sure that Kenyon—at all events at first—would have had his hero a trifle more heroic than Heaven had made him. There was nothing intrinsically venerable in his person, presence, or bearing—and there might have been. He was infinitely more friendly than Kenyon had dreamt of finding him; he was infinitely nicer, but he did lack the vague, inexpressible distinction with which the boy's imagination invested the heroes of *Lillywhite*. He had imagination, Kenyon: his quaint literary predilection alone argued an abnormal development there.

That summer was the loveliest of late years; and Kenyon made the most of it—the utmost. He had never before seemed so strong, and well, and promising. For the first time in his life his really miserable little body seemed equal—at moments—to his mighty spirit; and the days of C. J. were the brightest and happiest he had ever known. In that jolly, manly companionship the unrealised want of an intensely masculine young soul was insensibly filled. Hard lines, perhaps, to fill it for so short a time; but better so than never, surely. Kenyon remarked, cheerfully,

that the day after C. J. went Tommy Barnard (the boy with the cricket-net, who taught slang) would be home from Harrow; but he knew very well that T. B. could never be very much to him after C. J. The cricketer's departure was at hand in a moment, almost. He had put it off, and off, because he liked Kenyon with an extraordinary liking. But he was wanted at the Oval on the last Thursday in July; his play with Kenyon and John (though John had a very fair notion of bowling) could by no stretch of imagination be regarded as practice for an important county match; he decided to tear himself from Kenyon on the Tuesday morning.

He had been with them only a week, but the Harwoods had bitten deep into his life—into a life not altogether consecrated to cricket. Forrester had definite aspirations, and some very noble intentions; and he happened to possess the character to give this spiritual baggage some value, in his case. Also he had a kind heart, which Kenyon had won. He liked Ethel; but one could not merely like Kenyon, with his frail little frame and his splendid spirit. Ethel, however, was very sweet; her eyes were like Kenyon's in everything but their sadness—deep and lustrous, but so often sad. Her love for Kenyon was the most pathetic thing Forrester had ever seen—save one. The more touching spectacle was that of the father of Ethel and Kenyon, who seemed to have very little love for his children, and to conceal what he had; who consequently could never be anything more than a father to those two who had no one else—not their friend, certainly. He was nice enough to Forrester, who found him a different being at the club—affable, good-natured, amusing in his sardonic way. He talked a little to Forrester about the children—a very little, but enough to make Forrester sincerely sorry for him. He was sorrier for Mr. Harwood than for Ethel, or even Kenyon. He pitied him profoundly on Kenyon's account, but less because the boy might never live to grow up, than because, as *he* read father and son, there would never be much love to lose between them, however long Kenyon might live. And there was a chance for Kenyon yet. He had never been so well as he was this summer. His vitality—his amazing vitality—made it easy to believe that he would certainly live to grow up, and go on living. His trouble might never become a greater trouble than it had been already; and this summer it had been no trouble at all—he seemed almost to have forgotten his limp. He might yet go to school; and Forrester himself was going to start a small boys' school next summer, in partnership with an older man, in one of

the healthiest spots in the island. St. Crispin's had been spoken of for Kenyon. Kenyon himself spoke of little else during Forrester's last day or two. To go to school at St. Crispin's was now the dream of his life.

'I am sorry we told him about it,' Mr. Harwood said, gloomily. 'He may never be able to go there; he may never again be so well as he is now; all the summer it has seemed too good to last!'

Forrester, for his part, thought it good for the boy to have things to look forward to, and that, if he could go, the change of life and climate might prove the saving and making of him. Beyond this, he honestly hoped for the best (whereas Mr. Harwood seemed to look for the worst), and expressed his hope—often a really strong one—as plausibly as he could.

He carries with him still some intensely vivid impressions of this visit, but especially of the last day or two, when the weather was hotter than ever—take away one splendid shower—and Kenyon, if it were possible, more alert, active, and keen. He remembers, for instance, how Ethel and Kenyon and he tore to an outlying greenhouse for shelter during that shower; or rather, how he carried Kenyon. In the greenhouse, accompanied by a tremendous rattle of rain on the sloping glass, Kenyon sang them 'Willow the King,' the Harrow cricket song, which T. Barnard, to do him justice, had taught Kenyon among other pretty things. Clear through the years Forrester can hear Kenyon's jolly treble, and Ethel's shy notes, and his own most brazen bass, in the chorus; he recollects, too, the verse in which the singer broke down, through too strong a sense of its humour:—

'Who is this,' King Willow he swore,  
'Hops like that to a gentleman's door?  
Who's afraid of a Duke like him?  
Fiddlededee!' says the monarch slim:  
'What do you say, my courtiers three?'  
And the courtiers all said 'Fiddlededee!'

It does not seem funny to Forrester now.

But his last evening, the Monday, he remembers best. They had an immense match—double-wicket. The head gardener, the coachman, John (captain) and the butler made one side; Forrester, Kenyon, Ethel (Kenyon insisted), and Thomas Barnard (home early, *ager*) were the other. 'It's Gentlemen and Players,' John said, with a gaping grin; and the Players won, in spite of C. J., who at the last did all he knew, for Kenyon's sake.



It was a gorgeous evening. The sun set slowly, on a gaudy screen; the wealth of colour was almost tropical. The red light glared between the trees, their crests swayed gently against the palest, purest amber. Mr. Harwood looked on rather kindly, with his cigar; and the shadow of his son, in for the second time, lay along the pitch like a single plank. Ethel was running for him, and it was really exciting, for there were runs to get—it was the last wicket—and Kenyon, to C. J.'s secret sorrow, and in spite of C. J.'s distinguished coaching, was not a practical cricketer. But he did really very well this evening. They did not bowl too easily to him, for he would not have stood that; they bowled very nearly their best; but Kenyon's bat managed somehow to get in the way, and once he got hold of one wide of his legs, and sent it an astonishing way—in fact, over the wall. Even Mr. Harwood clapped his hands, and Forrester muttered, 'That's the happiest moment of his life!' Certainly Kenyon knew more about that leg-hit ever afterwards than he did at the moment, for, it must be owned, it was a fluke; but a minute after it was made Kenyon was out—run out, through Ethel's petticoats, and the game was lost.

'Ethel!' he cried out, his flush of ecstasy wiped away in a minute. 'I could have run the thing myself!'

Ethel was dreadfully grieved, and showed it so unmistakably that Kenyon, shifting his ground, turned hotly to an unlucky groom who had been standing umpire.

'I don't believe she *was* out, Fisher!' he exclaimed, more angrily than ever. Mr. Harwood snatched his cigar from his mouth; but C. J. forestalled his interference, coming up from behind and taking Kenyon quietly by the arm.

'My dear fellow, I'm surprised at you! To dispute the umpire like this—why, I thought you were such a sportsman? You must learn to take a licking, and go out grinning, like a man!'

Kenyon was crushed—by his hero. He stammered an apology, with a crimson face, and left the lawn with the sweetness of that leg-hit turned in an instant to gall. And there was a knock at Forrester's door while he was dressing for dinner, and in crept Kenyon, hanging his head, and shut the door, and burst into tears.

'Oh, you'll never think the same of me again, C. J.! A nice fellow you'll think me, who can't stand getting out—a nice fellow for your school!'

C. J., in his shirt and trousers, looked down very tenderly on the little quivering fellow in flannels, who was standing awkwardly, as he sometimes would when tired.

'My dear old fellow, it was only a game—yet it was life! We live our lives as we play our games; and we *must* be sportsmen, and bide by the umpire's decision, and go out grinning when it's against us. Do you see, Ken?'

'I see,' said Kenyon, with sudden firmness. 'I've learnt a lesson; I'll never forget it!'

'Ah, you may learn many a lesson from cricket, Ken,' said Forrester. 'And when you have learnt to play the game—pluckily, unselfishly, as well as you can—then you've learnt how to live too!' He was only saying what he has been preaching to his school ever since; but now he says that no one has ever attended to him as Kenyon did.

Kenyon looked up with wet, pleading eyes: 'Then—then you'll have me at St. Crispin's?'

But Forrester only ruffled the boy's brown hair.

### III.

A VARIETY of hindrances prevented Forrester from revisiting Kenyon's father until August in the following year, when he arrived in the grey evening of a repulsive day. As before, he came straight from the Nottingham match; he had started his school, but was getting as much cricket as he could in the holidays. It was raining heavily when he jumped out of the carriage which had been sent to meet him; Mr. Harwood shook his hand in the cold twilight of the hall. House and host seemed silent and depressed. Forrester looked for Kenyon—for his hat, for some sign of him—as one searches for a break in the clouds.

'Where is he?' was his first sentence, almost. 'Where *is* Kenyon?'

'Kenyon? He's in bed.'

'Since when?'

'The beginning of last month.'

Forrester looked horrified; his manner seemed rather to irritate Mr. Harwood.

'Surely I wrote and told you, Forrester; have you forgotten? I wrote to say he couldn't come last term—that he had fallen off during the winter, and was limping badly. Didn't you get the letter? But you did—you answered it.'

'Yes, yes. I know all that,' said Forrester, in a bewildered

way; 'I answered, and you never answered *me*. Then the term came on, and you don't know what it was. I had all my time taken up, every moment. And I have been playing cricket ever since we broke up. But—but the truth is, I've been having the most cheerful letters from Kenyon the whole time!'

'That's it; he *is* cheerful.'

'He never said he was in bed!'

'You weren't to know of it, on any account. But I thought you would be prepared for it.'

'Not with those letters. I can hardly believe it! Will he—will he be able——'

'No, never. But you will find him as keen about it as ever, and as mad on cricket. He tells me, by the way, you've been doing great things yesterday—in fact, I read him the report—and he's wild with delight about it. Will you come up and see him? You'll get an ovation!'

Forrester nodded, setting his teeth. While they were conversing Ethel had entered the hall, shaken hands with him, and vanished up the shallow stairs, leaving the hall more gloomy than before. He remembered this presently; also that Ethel, in a single year, seemed changed from a child to a woman. But at the time he could see one thing only—a vision, a memory. The peculiar sadness in Mr. Harwood's tones—the tenderness which was still untender, yet very different from last year's note—had not struck him yet. He could think only of Kenyon as he best remembered him, playing cricket with a sunburnt face, ardent, triumphant, angry, penitent, ashamed, and of Kenyon as he dreaded to look upon him now.

Mr. Harwood stopped on the stairs.

'I wish you could help me in one thing, Forrester. He is still counting on your school, and now he can never go. He needn't know this; but could you—I wish you could make him think less about it!'

Forrester coloured a little. 'I wish I could,' he said, thoughtfully; 'and perhaps I can; for somehow I am myself less anxious to have him than I was last year. I have often been thankful he wasn't one of the boys this last term. I couldn't have borne to pitch into him as I have had to pitch into most of them. When I was here before I only looked on the pleasant side of it all; I can tell him there's another side.'

Kenyon looked a great length as he lay stretched out in bed; he seemed to have grown a good deal. His thin face was flushed

with anticipation; his fine eyes burnt eagerly; he had heard the wheels in the wet gravel under his window, and C. J.'s voice in the hall and on the stairs. A thin white arm lay over the counterpane, the fingers clasping a newspaper. As Forrester entered, with a trepidation of which he was ashamed, the thin arm flourished the newspaper wildly.

'Well played, sir!' Kenyon almost thundered from his pillow. 'Your score won the match; come and shake hands on it!'

Forrester, who had certainly troubled the Nottingham bowlers this time, was more taken aback than he had ever been on the cricket-field, where astonishing things do happen. He went to the bedside, and sat down there, and pressed very tenderly the small boy's slender hands; but he had not a thing to say.

'The *Sportsman*,' continued Kenyon, beating the bed with that paper, 'says it was a fine display of cricket, and that you're in splendid form just now. So you are. Look what you did against Surrey! Do you remember how that match came *after* Notts last year, and you left here to play in it? I'm glad it was the other way round, this season; and I'm glad—oh, I say, how glad I am you've come!'

'Dear old boy! But—but don't you think you might have told me you were like this, old fellow?'

Kenyon tossed his head on the pillow. 'I couldn't,' he exclaimed; 'it was too sickening. Besides, I thought——'

'Well?'

'You mightn't be very keen to come, you know.'

'You need not have thought that, Kenyon; and I don't believe you *did* think it.'

'Well, I won't swear that I did; but anyhow I didn't want you to know before you must—for lots of reasons.'

Forrester did not ask what the reasons were. He could divine one of them: the boy had hoped to be up and well before he came. Forrester wondered whether that hope held yet, and whether he honestly could share it any longer, if it did. He looked at Kenyon as he confronted this question: the flush of delight and excitement had subsided from the young wan face, which had now an unhealthy pallor. His face had been the best part about Kenyon last year, the part that inspired confidence and faith. Forrester strove to talk cricket again. Kenyon had a hundred pet cricketers, his favourites and friends on paper, whom he spoke of by their initials and knew intimately on the cricket-fields of his fancy, as formerly he had known and spoken

of C. J. himself. C. J. tried to tell him of those he had met lately; but the young fellow was ill at ease mentally, he could not think of the right men; he took the newspaper to his assistance.

'So John still gets you the *Sportsman*,' he remarked incidentally.

'No, John doesn't.'

'You don't mean that he's left?'

'Rather not! He comes up to see me every day; the governor fetches him; and it's the governor who brings me the *Sportsman*!'

'Really?'

'Yes, and *Cricket*, and the *Field*, and all the other papers that you see all over the shop.'

'It's too dark to see all over the shop,' said Forrester, laying down the paper. 'I call it very good of your father, though.'

'He *is* good. He's awfully good to me since I've been lying-up, is the governor. He sits with me a lot, and reads and talks to me; I like him to read. But he doesn't understand much about cricket, you know. He reads me the full account of the play when I've looked at the score; but I'd as soon read them to myself if it wasn't for offending him. You see, he can't be interested, though he says he is. I should think he'd be very glad if you did it for him; and you'd understand, you know, and we could talk about it.'

Forrester was thinking. Mr. Harwood had left him alone with Kenyon, hardly entering the room himself; and there had been a look on his face, as he withdrew, which Forrester happened to see, and failed to understand. Now he read it: Kenyon, no doubt, had greeted him as he never could have greeted his father—his father, who, by the boy's own showing, was trying, at the last, to be his friend. The thought troubled Forrester. He had been touched by a something in Mr. Harwood's manner, in the hall, on the stairs, and still more by what Kenyon had just told him; he was pleased with Kenyon's evident appreciation of his father's kindness; but—there were more buts than he could sort or separate now and here. What he did feel instantly, and acutely, was a premonition of involuntary intervention, on his own part, between father and child. In his difficulty he smoothed back the long brown hair from Kenyon's forehead, and looked gently into the eager eyes.

'We'll see, old fellow,' he said at last; 'your father mightn't

quite like it, I think; and of course, as you say, you wouldn't like to offend him. Stick to that, Kenyon; always be good to your father and Ethel.'

'They're awfully good to me, certainly,' said Kenyon, thoughtfully. 'Ethel's an angel! Have you seen her with her hair up, C. J.?'

'I just saw her in the hall; she seems much older.'

'She's a brick! But I say—I'm sure the governor wouldn't mind—you reading the cricket, I mean. It *must* bore him, whatever he says; how can it help doing?'

'It might bore him to read it to himself; it may delight him to read it to you.'

Kenyon turned his cheek to the pillow, and stared at the dismal evening sky. I think he was wondering, in his small way, if he was a very ungrateful, unnatural son; and trying to account for it, if it was so; and wishing he were comfortably certain it was not so.

'Besides,' added Forrester, 'I shall not be able to stay many days, you know.' Indeed, he was thinking he had better not stay. But Kenyon's eyes were on him in a twinkling.

'How many?' he asked, almost with a gasp.

'A week at the outside; it's the Lancashire match the week after next.'

Again Kenyon looked away; his sharp profile on the pillow looked sharper than before. 'Of course you must play against Lancashire—and make your century,' he said. And it must have been the way he said it that made Forrester determine, at that moment, to cancel his remaining cricket engagements; it must have been an incommunicably pathetic way, for C. J. was a great cricketer who loved great cricket, and got very little of it now.

Kenyon went on:

'I'm hoping to get up, you know, before long. Surely I've been here long enough? It's all rot, I say, keeping you in bed like this; you get as weak as a cat. I believe the governor thinks so too. I know they're going to have a doctor down from London to see me. If he lets me get up, and you stay, or come back, we might have some more cricket, mightn't we? I was hoping so to have some before the term begins; I want another of those leg hits. I say, they think I might be able to go to St. Crispin's next term, don't they?'

Forrester remembered. 'I don't know. You might be *able*, perhaps.'



'Why do you say it like that?'

'Shall I tell you, old fellow? I'm not quite so anxious to have you as I was a year ago. Stop! I'll tell you why. I didn't know what it would be like then; I think I fancied I should have a dozen Kenyons, and that Kenyon at school would be a saint; which was absurd, St. Kenyon! I thought I should never, never, never lose my temper with you—which was worse than absurd. We talked, you and I, of what we knew nothing about; I know something now; and let me tell you it isn't all skittles and beer, Kenyon! Listen: there wasn't a fellow in the school I didn't punish, time out of mind. Punish is a jolly word, isn't it? It would have been nice for us both, wouldn't it, my punishing *you*? Kenyon, there were two fellows I had to swish! Do you understand? I felt thankful you weren't there. I don't any longer feel that I want you there. I'd rather some other man kept you in, Kenyon, and licked you, old fellow, when you needed it.' The truth is, Forrester had long had all this on his mind; as he uttered the last of it, he almost forgot why he had uttered it now, and what Mr. Harwood had said on the stairs.

Kenyon lay very still, watching the darkling sky, split in two by the window-sashes. He had dreamed of that school continually; he had looked forward to it so long. It was hard suddenly to stop looking forward—to have no more happy imaginary school-days from this moment forth. Yet it was easy, too; in some ways a relief even, for now there was less necessity to be well and up immediately—less anxiety; and the element of self-deception, young as he was, had underlain Kenyon's views and hopes in this regard. But this comfort came later. Kenyon said at last, with a long sigh:

'So would I! I'm glad you've told me this, C. J. I'm not so keen now, though I *have* been looking forward . . . I suppose I couldn't even have called you C. J., eh?'

'No, you'd have had to "sir" me.'

'Indeed, sir! Then I'm thankful I'm not going, sir! There's the gong, sir—yessir; you must go and dress, sir! The governor'll bring you up to say good-night with him. And to-morrow—I've heaps of things to tell you to-morrow, C. J. I'll think of 'em all night—*sir*!'

There were tears on his eyelashes, all the same; but the room was now really dark; C. J. never knew.

Forrester's disquieting apprehension of intrusion on his part, of that cruel intervention from which he shrank, was not for long

a vague sensation. Mr. Harwood himself defined it with startling candour, this very first evening, at dinner.

Forrester had described the latter part of his chat with Kenyon, the part consequent on something Mr. Harwood had said on the stairs, and on another thing which had long been in his own mind. 'I wouldn't have Kenyon, now I know what it is like,' he had averred, with all the earnestness he had employed upstairs.

'You wouldn't get him,' said Mr. Harwood, in sad irony. 'He will never be well enough, Bodley is sure, to go to school.'

'Is Dr. Bodley a very good man?'

'He is a very good doctor in ordinary, so to speak; but Kenyon's case is not exactly ordinary. Bodley is getting down a London man, a specialist, for a consultation. Kenyon knows about it.'

'Yes, he thought it was to see whether he might get up.'

'Whether there is the least chance of his *ever* getting up—that is more like it! I think he never will. There is some hopeless disease of the hip. An operation is the only chance, and you know what a faint one.'

'I'm glad I am here!' Forrester involuntarily exclaimed; and it was at this that Mr. Harwood had pierced him with his eye, and spoken his mind.

'I am glad too,' said he, slowly; 'yet I am sore—God knows how sore!'

The young man moved in his chair, but did not rise. Mr. Harwood held him with his eye. Forrester leant his elbow on the table, his head against his palm, and met that bitter, pitiable, yearning glance.

'I am glad, because Kenyon wanted you so much; I am sore because he wanted *you* so much! Look at the reception he gave you, ill as he is! I never make him like that. I might have left him for weeks, alone with Ethel and the servants, and he wouldn't have welcomed me so! Yet I am always with him! I do everything for him. I have been another man to him, Forrester, since you were here last year. You taught me a lesson. I don't know whether I like you or hate you for it. You taught me to be my boy's friend—at any rate to try. Up to then I had been only his father. But I did try to be his friend, as you had been, when you were gone. It wasn't easy. We tired each other—we always did, we always may. We irritate each other too—he *will* seem frightened, and fight shy of me! I suppose I deserve it—God knows! We have understood each other better, we have tired

each other less—I am sure—since he has been up yonder. But, all the time, he has been looking forward to your coming—to going to your school in the end. About this he has talked incessantly, as if it were the one thing to get better for—and about you! You're his hero, he worships you; I am only his father. You are everything to him, while I am nothing!'

Forrester was inexpressibly shocked and touched. 'You are mistaken!' he cried earnestly. 'He has been telling me already how good you are to him—of all you do for him.'

'Ah! he is a good boy; he is very grateful. He always says, "Thank you"—to *me*! Heaven, how I wish he'd forget that sometimes! But no; it was in those little things that I was continually finding fault with him, and now his politeness cuts me to the soul! He has a special manner for me. He thinks before he speaks when he speaks to me. And I see it all! Why, I stand outside the door, and hear him talking to Ethel, and when I open it his very key changes. With you it's a hundred times worse. With you—God help me!' cried Harwood, with a harsh laugh, 'I'm like some great schoolgirl, jealous of you for winning what I never tried nor deserved to win!'

He wiped the moisture from his face, and sat cold and still.

'I'll go to-morrow!' said Forrester, hoarsely.

'You will do nothing of the kind,' retorted Mr. Harwood coolly, as though he had not for once forgotten himself. 'You will stay as long as Kenyon wants you!'

#### IV.

FORRESTER was early abroad next morning—as once before. The weather had cleared up in the night. Sunlight and dew did just what they had done that other morning, now nearly thirteen months ago. Sounds and smells were the same now as then. Forrester tried to imagine it *was* then, and to conjure Kenyon to his side. But Kenyon lay in bed behind yonder blind on the sunny side of the house, and Forrester wandered desolate over last year's ground. He looked into the flagged yard where painted wickets still disfigured a certain buttress, and was sorry he had thrown cold water on 'snob.' On the lawn he saw other wickets, which no man had pitched, and worn places that had long been green. There was the peach-house, with the sun glowing where once the rain had beaten and 'Willow the King' had been sung. He could hear it still—he can hear it now. He met John, who was visibly incon-

venienced ; and returning to the house, he found Ethel on the steps. She looked very fresh and beautiful, certainly. The young man admired her half-heartedly—the other half in the room upstairs, where her heart was also. A common bond of sadness drew them insensibly together. They remained there, very silent, till the gong sounded within.

Something that Mr. Harwood told him—with a letter in his hand—as they sat down to breakfast, caused Forrester to run upstairs the moment they rose. Kenyon received him with grateful eyes, but with a very slight salute this morning. Sunshine flooded the room, even to the edge of the bed. Things invisible in the dusk of the previous evening caught the strong light and the eye now—the bottles, the graduated glasses, the bed-table, the photograph of Kenyon's mother fastened to the screen. And Kenyon himself, with the sun claspings his long brown hair, and filling the hollows of his pinched face, was a more distinct and an infinitely more pitiful figure this morning.

‘You know what’s going to happen to-day, C. J.?’

‘The doctors are coming—the one from London. Your father told me just before breakfast.’

‘Call them the umpires,’ said Kenyon, in a queer tone. ‘Say they’re going to give me in or out!’

Forrester made no remark. Kenyon lay watching him.

‘You’re perfectly right, C. J. I thought of that before. I thought of it in the night. I had time to think plenty, last night!’

‘What! didn’t you sleep, then?’

‘Not a wink in the night. I’ve slept a little since daylight.’

‘Were you—you were in pain, Kenyon!’

‘Don’t speak of it,’ said Kenyon, grimly. ‘It was so bad that I didn’t care what happened to me; and I don’t care now, when I remember it. I’m thankful the doctors are coming this morning—I mean the umpires. Anything’s better than last night over again. I’ve felt nothing like it before.’

‘And you never will again,’ said his friend, encouragingly; ‘they’ll see to that.’

‘Will they?’ Kenyon made a wistful pause. ‘So I thought, up to last night: I thought they’d get me up and out again. In the night I gave up thinking so. I lay here, C. J., and asked only to be put out of my misery. I never had such a bad night before—nothing like. I’ve had my bad ones, but I used to grin

and bear it, and think away of St. Crispin's, and you, and the fellows. Only last night——'

'Well?' said C. J., in a hard voice. His heart had smitten him.

'Well, you'd made me give up the idea of St. Crispin's, you know. Don't look like that—it's just as well you did. Only I hadn't it to think about in the night. I missed it.'

He shut his eyes. He *had* been thinking of St. Crispin's, but not in the old way—no longer as within his reach. Ideals are not shattered so easily by hearsay: St. Crispin's was heaven to Kenyon still, though now he might not enter in. Well, one would rather never get there than find heaven imperfect too. And Kenyon, had he been older, would have appreciated his blessedness in being permitted to lay down this ideal unsubstantiated and as good as new; for not C. J., but experience only, could have razed so solid a castle in the air; C. J. had only lifted the drawbridge against Kenyon for ever.

But Forrester was thinking differently. He was thinking of Mr. Harwood—of Ethel—of last night at dinner, when Ethel had gone.

'My dear fellow,' he said, 'you speak as though school were the only thing you had to live for!'

'Well, it was the thing I wanted to get better for,' replied Kenyon, frankly; 'the chief thing, anyhow. Of course I want to be up and out here as well. I love this dear old place!'

'Do you want to get strong only for your own sake?' Forrester could not help saying, gently. 'Do you never think of Ethel, of your father? I am sure you do!'

Kenyon coloured. 'Don't, old fellow! It's hard to think of anybody but yourself when you're laid up in bed for weeks and weeks. But Ethel knows that I do sometimes think about her; and that reminds me, C. J.; I was going to ask you to play tennis with her, or take her out for a ride, or something—she needs something. I say, *doesn't* she look ripping with her hair up? . . . And then the governor, he's so decent to me now. Of course I'd like to get better for his sake too. I think he'd make less fuss about the windows now—I'd like to break another and see! But it's no good pretending I'm as sorry for them as for myself—I *can't* be!'

'You are very honest,' said Forrester, looking kindly into the great bright eyes. 'I wish all fellows were as brave and honest as you!'

'I'm not so brave. You know what I've gone through

up here, alone, in the night, besides this pain. I've been thinking about—*it*. C. J., I don't know, now, that I'm going to get better at all. I pray to, and I try to, but I don't know that I am. Don't jump up. I daren't say it very loud. You're the first I've said it to at all. It only came to me last night. . . . It seems pretty hard. Look at the sun! With the window open like this, and my eyes shut, it's almost as good as lying out on the grass. Dear old place! . . . Why have you jumped up? What are you looking out of the window for? Are they coming yet?'

'No,' said Forrester; but, indeed, he could not see.

I was saying it was hard. I was going to tell you the only thing that makes it easy—the only thing, besides a night like last night, that makes it anything like easy. Look here!'

Forrester faced about, but still stood near the window, with his back to it. He followed Kenyon's eyes and finger. His face was averted. A shaft of sunshine still touched it, falling kindly on the long brown hair and white sharp cheek; but no ray reached the screen, or the photograph at which Kenyon looked and pointed—the sweet young face of Kenyon's mother.

'She makes it easy,' he whispered. 'She's there.'

He stopped, and listened intently.

'There they are! I hear the wheels. I do wish they hadn't come so soon. I wanted to tell you something else—another thing I thought of last night. It's specially for you, C. J.; I'll tell you afterwards. Will you come up and tell me what the doctors—what the umpires give me, in or out? Oh, I know you will! I can bear it from you! Promise—promise to come and tell me!'

Pressing Kenyon's hands, Forrester promised, and hastened from the room.

When he returned, the sun shone into the room no more; it was afternoon.

Kenyon was very white.

'Well?'

'Kenyon, they don't know!'

'But they're still in the house. Why haven't they gone? What are they waiting for? Tell me, C. J. You said you'd tell me!'

'Poor old Kenyon—dear old fellow,' faltered Forrester. 'I promised to tell you, I know I did, and downstairs they've asked me to tell you. Now you'll never feel it, Kenyon. They're going



to do something which may make you better. You—you'll be put to sleep—you'll never feel a thing!'

'When is it to be?'

'This afternoon—very soon.'

Kenyon drew a hard breath.

'You've got to be in the room, C. J. !'

'Very well, if they will let me. But you'll never know, Kenyon—you'll know nothing at all about it!'

'They *must* let you. You've got to hold my hand right through, whether I feel anything or not. Do you see?'

'My dear boy! My brave old fellow!'

'Do you *promise*?'

'I promise.'

'Then they will have to let you. They will let you, when we both ask them. Stop—I'm sure you can stop one minute. I wish this hadn't come so soon. There was so much I want to tell you. Now I want to tell you what I thought of last night—what I remembered. You know the game we had, the night before you went, last summer? John would call it Gentlemen and Players; poor old John! I remember every bit of it—especially that leg hit. It was sweet! Well, when Ethel got run out, and our side lost—ah! you remember; I knew you would—I played the fool, and you told me not to grumble at the umpire's decision. You said life was like cricket, and I mustn't dispute the umpire, but go out grinning——'

'I didn't mean that, Kenyon! I swear I didn't! I never thought——'

'I know you didn't, but I did, in the night; and I'm thinking of it now, C. J.; I'm thinking of nothing else!'

Kenyon had rallied. A week, nearly, had passed. It had done no good; but it had not killed him.

The afternoon was hot, and still, and golden. The window of Kenyon's room was wide open; it had been wide open every day. Below, on the court beyond the drive, Forrester and Ethel were playing a sober single. Kenyon had rallied so surprisingly, and had himself begged them to play. He could not hear them, for he was asleep. It was a pity; but he was sleeping continually. Mr. Harwood, however, sat by Kenyon, in the deep arm-chair, and he heard them with some satisfaction. He had Kenyon to himself. He had sent the nurse to lie down in her room. The afternoon, though brilliant, was still and oppressive.

How long he slept! Mr. Harwood seldom took his eyes from the smooth white forehead, whiter than usual under its thatch of brown hair. It was damp, often, and the hair clung to it; Mr. Harwood would smooth back the hair, and actually not awake Kenyon, with the sponge. The strong man's fingers were grown incredibly light and tender. He would stand for minutes when he had done this, gazing down on the pale young face with the long brown locks and lashes. They were Kenyon's mother's eyelashes, as long and as dark. When Mr. Harwood raised his eyes from the boy, it was to gaze at her photograph on the screen. Kenyon in his sleep was extremely like her. The eyes in the portrait were downcast a little; they seemed to rest on Kenyon, to beckon him.

The voices of Ethel and Forrester, never loud, were audible all the time. And Mr. Harwood was glad to hear them. He did not want those two up here. He would not have Forrester up here any more; only Kenyon would. It was Forrester who had held the child's unconscious hand during the operation, and until Kenyon became sensible, when 'C. J.!' was the first sound he uttered. There had been too much Forrester all through. Since the operation there had been more Forrester than Forrester himself quite like. It was Kenyon's doing, and Kenyon must have all his wishes now. It was not Forrester's fault. Mr. Harwood knew this, and hated Kenyon's friend the more bitterly for the feeling that another man would have loved him.

How Kenyon slept! How strange, how shallow, his breath seemed all at once! Mr. Harwood rose again, and again smoothed the long hair back from the forehead. The forehead glistened: and this time Kenyon awoke. There was a dim unseeing look in his eyes. He held out a hand, and Mr. Harwood grasped it, dropping on his knees beside the bed.

'Stick to my hand. Never let go again. Remember what you told me? I do—I'm thinking of it now!'

Mr. Harwood did not remember telling him any one thing. He was kneeling with his back to the window. Kenyon's sentences had come with long intervals between them, and accompanied by the most loving glances his father had ever received from him. The father's heart throbbed violently. Perhaps he realised that his boy was dying; he realised with far greater intensity that Kenyon and he were alone together, and that childish love and trust had come at last into the dear, dying eyes. He had striven so hard to win this look—had longed for it of late with so mighty a

longing! And at the last it was his. What else was there to grasp?

Kenyon began to murmur indistinctly—about cricket—about getting out. Mr. Harwood leant closer to catch the words, and to drink deeper while he could of the dim, loving eyes. But there came suddenly a change of expression. Kenyon was silent. And Mr. Harwood never knew why!

In the garden they heard the cry, and sped into the house, and up the stairs and into the room, warm from their game. They opened the door and stood still; for they saw Kenyon as none ever had seen him before, with his face upon his father's shoulder, and a smile there such as Forrester himself had never won.

E. W. HORNING.

## *The Lampreys of the Severn and the Teme.*

SOME confusion exists in the popular mind with regard to the various species of Petromyzontidæ, or lampreys, found at one time or another in our English rivers. In the Severn and its tributaries there are three separate species for at least a part of the year.

The great sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*) merely pays occasional visits towards the breeding season in May and June. I have watched them in the Teme, above Worcester, clouding the water with red mud stains as they wriggle backwards and forwards to make a hole suitable for the deposition of spawn. In length this great lamprey varies from two to three feet, being as thick as a 4-lb. eel, from which it is readily distinguished, like all its kind, by the seven circular breathing holes on either side of the head, and by the cartilaginous snout. In colour it is olive-brown, mottled and marbled with bright yellow and black in ever varying degree. Somewhat sluggish in movement, the sea lamprey may sometimes be thrown out of the water from beneath the stones by means of a forked stick. I have myself witnessed this operation by the side of the Teme.

One piping hot day in June I happened to be by the river quietly enjoying the pure sunshine, and listening to the eternal splash of the water foaming beneath a weir. The very trickle of the stream seemed to cool the atmosphere, and the drowsy hum of insect life was thoroughly conducive to repose. I had been watching the movements of a sedge-warbler restlessly creeping amid the branches of the blue-green willows. For a time it did nothing but swear at me for an intrusive observer; I could see the light and dark streaks on the head, and the ruddy tinge above the tail-coverts. Seeing that I did not move, it gradually became more friendly, and soon broke into that delicious, yet very gentle,

soft melody which, in the opinion of many close observers, rivals the song of the nightingale itself, for which it has often been mistaken. Suddenly my attention was directed to the wanderings of a small urchin among the pools and stones of the river bed. Intent on the search of some quarry, he was prodding away with a forked stick. Almost before I had realised his object, he had thrown a long, wriggling creature from the stream on to the green bank above. In great excitement he clambered up to gain the prize, and I likewise hurried to the spot. Crawling amid the grass, and palpably making for the stream, lay a splendid black and yellow lamprey, evidently fresh from the sea. The spinal cord was quickly severed with a pocket-knife, and the lad made off with his fish. Since that time I have each year observed the movements of the spawning lampreys in the same place.

The river lampern (*Petromyzon fluviatilis*) is, in the Severn and Teme, one of the regular migratory fish ascending in autumn and winter when a freshet facilitates an upward movement, remaining to spawn in May and June, and returning whence it came in the later summer. The body rarely exceeds a foot in length, being of a uniform slate or olive tone, lighter in shade on the underneath parts of the body. The holes at each side of the head and the circular mouth are similar to those of the sea lamprey. The dorsal fin in the full-grown fish is divided into two parts, and is, in this respect, unlike the larval or ammocæteous form discovered by Müller in Germany little more than thirty years ago. The lamprey genus is, I believe, the only example among British fishes of a distinct metamorphosis, the immature stages showing structural differences that have caused considerable confusion in exact specific classification. In the young fish the shape of the mouth is different from that of a mature lamprey, and the dorsal fin is entire. This applies to both the great sea lamprey and the river lampern, the powers of suction being also gradually acquired.

The male and female of the river lampern can be at once distinguished during the upward spring migration, the abdomen of the female being a good deal distended by the quantity of enlarging ova. Like other fishes the males shed their milt on the eggs in the mud, the young lamperns later in the season creeping in numbers among the weeds and stones by the side of weirs and locks. In all stages of growth these fishes are destitute of scales.

The third species found in the Severn is not well known, and its life history is still obscure. Known to ichthyologists as the

sand pride or mud lamprey (*Petromyzon branchialis*), and locally in Worcestershire as the 'vampern,' this little fish dwells in the sand, rarely appearing as a free swimmer. It is but a few inches in length, the colour being a dull yellow-brown. The mouth is triangular; there are the usual circular holes corresponding to the internal gill-sacs, but at no stage can the creature adhere by suction, as the other lampreys invariably do. At times I have thought it might be the larval form of the river lampern. The fishermen use it for the capture of chub in the Teme; it is also a killing bait for trout if substituted for the minnow. From a more extended observation I have come to the conclusion that this sand pride is separate from the lampern; that it never develops beyond the size specified—six inches—and that it never descends to the sea. The specific characters are nearer to those of the river lampern than to those of the sea lamprey, and a few may generally be found in the Teme.

It was by a pure accident that I stumbled upon this—the smallest species of lamprey—in the river. An angler was one day using, in a very skilful manner, the Nottingham tackle in chub-fishing. He had taken up his station at a favourite bend of the stream, where the deep red marl banks contracted, and the broken water dashed swiftly over the river bed. I had seen him strike a couple of fish—each 1 lb. in weight—and had watched him land them successfully. Drawing closer to the spot, I saw that the bait employed was like a tiny eel, but that it had the mouth and breathing organs of the lampreys. 'Oh, yes,' the man replied to my questions, 'it was the *vampern*, and the very best of live bait in coarse fishing.' Noticing my curiosity, he added, 'You can find it for yourself in the sand down there.' This I found to be the exact truth. In a likely pool, where the slackening current had deposited a ridge of fine sand and grit, I commenced an investigation on my own account. Carefully surrounding an islet of silt, I scooped out the *débris* with the aid of a stick and my own hands. Several inches below the surface, and resting in total unconcern, I found the vampern, or sand pride—a pair of them together in the sand. Escape was cut off, so that I had little difficulty in grabbing both. Neither could adhere to my hand, a stone, or a fragment of wood. The angular mouth is not so well adapted for suction; the dorsal fin, also, is undivided and entire.

The three lampreys of the Severn system are thus fairly distinct and well marked, the only point of doubt being whether



the river lamprey and the sand pride are not one and the same fish in different degrees of growth. Chiefly because the lesser form is invariably non-adhesive, I conclude the species are divided from each other by a hard-and-fast line, the characters being non-interchangeable.

On a chill October night, when mists were rising by the Teme-side, and the fog assumed fantastic shapes around the shivering willows, I have, with the assistance of a lantern, seen the river lamperns gliding along beneath the deep banks, collecting in still pools, or firmly attached by the mouth to sticks or stones in the eddying river. They love to travel in the darkness when the water in the river is sufficiently high. Place your hand in the cold stream, and presently a peculiar drawing sensation reveals the fact that a lampern is fastening to the flesh by means of its round gristly mouth. Draw your hand from the water, and the wriggling fish remains firmly suspended, sticking like a leech to the fingers. The removal of the sucking beast is no easy matter; there it remains as tight as wax. I have found by careful experiment that if every one of the seven holes on either side of the head can be stopped with the fingers—as if playing upon a flute—the lampern is soon compelled to release its hold, the suction power completely failing. Far back in the mouth there is a prolonged cartilaginous tongue, or lingual appendage. I have thought sometimes that the movement of this in some way regulates the action of the breathing apparatus. The upper and lower jaws are armed with soft teeth, but the chief power is evidently derived from suction. A lampern will adhere to another fish, gradually eating a way into the flaky sides of the unwilling host, and ultimately causing death to the victim. During the spawning operations the adhesive power is also of value. A pair of lamperns have been seen to raise a heavy stone by their united efforts, swimming down stream for a few yards with the stone attached to the snouts until the desired spot was reached; there the fragment is suddenly released to fall into the mud below. It is then worked about until a sufficient space is excavated for the deposition of eggs. In the conduct of this operation there is some engineering skill revealed in the appreciation of mechanical force. Never do the fish attempt to carry stones against the current, and the requisite distance for transport and weight of the material to be suspended are always calculated to a nicety.

After the ova have been hatched, and the young lamperns disport themselves among the weeds, there comes an intermediate

stage, when all the young fish disappear until shortly before the season for the seaward migration. The suspicion has been that—buried in the sand—they are then known as the sand pride; but, for the reasons before stated, I think the species are separate. There are many deep holes and places in the rivers where the young lamperns might pass the intermediate condition unobserved and undetected. During both migrations they are caught in considerable quantities at the mills and weirs, in baskets especially constructed for the purpose.

Frozen by means of ether, the body of a lampern is most convenient for dissection. The transverse section of the spinal cord shows the notochord and cartilage of the vertebra, and the nerves can be easily stained for microscopic examination. The crystalline lens and structure of the eye are also very beautiful. The nasal orifice appears to end in a nerveless sac, implying that the creature has no sense of smell, and that the organ is degenerated to a mere vestige. The body is destitute of scales, the bones are all soft, and the hardest part is the gristle around the mouth. The male is usually slightly less than the female, although the colour is the same. The movement of the body through the water reveals the same flexibility and quickness as the eel, and they run chiefly at night, accumulating at times in pools by the river bank until a spate descends from above. A continued deficiency of water in the river is enough to account for a dearth of lamperns in the migratory season, for then the fish cannot ascend. Weirs or artificial obstructions will not check their upward course, as they will crawl up the very sides and gates of the locks, like the eels, regardless of all hindrances. Four pounds per ton, or about a penny apiece, represents the commercial value of the fish obtained in the proper season; and stewed in port, or simply potted, they are esteemed as a great delicacy in the West of England. The structure of the circular mouth not being adapted for seizing a bait with readiness, lamperns are never taken by means of rod and line. Half a dozen specimens kept in a fresh water aquarium died within a month, feeling the want, I presume, of running water or a suitable food supply. The Thames and the Trent are said to be equally good lampern rivers with the Severn and its tributaries, but Worcester has always been the great centre for their capture. For centuries, also, the city of Gloucester paid an annual tribute of a dish of lampreys to the king in return for certain fishery rights conferred; in the present day large numbers of riverside men are interested in the fishing

operations, chiefly working at night, when the lamperns are moving, the necessary permission being obtained by license from the Severn Fisheries Board for stated periods of the year, which may be slightly extended if circumstances happen to retard the annual migration of the fish.

That extraordinary fish, the pouched lamprey of the Murray River in Australia, affords a striking contrast to our English species. Somewhat larger than a sea lamprey, and having all the same generic distinctions as the European relatives, this strange creature has acquired one special characteristic in the pouch, which can be distended at will, or according to circumstances, to assist the animal in the storage of water in times of excessive drought. Those who are familiar with the great Murray and Darling rivers know how variable the water supply is; at times an ample volume accumulates from the watersheds, and the adjacent plains are liable to rapid and disastrous floods. But too often the stream shrinks to insignificant dimensions; in certain parts the river absolutely fails, leaving pools of water surrounded by hard clay, which is caked at the surface under the influence of the vertical sun's rays. The Australian lamprey has its principal habitat in the Murray, and consequently, in the dry seasons, it is apt to be imbedded beneath the hardened clay, where no water is. As the stream recedes, the animal fills its pouch and disappears into the soft mud below, there to remain until the drought has passed away, subsisting on the moisture which it has learned to store in a specialised receptacle at the side of the head. As a matter of fact, the fish has mastered the difficult question of water storage on its own account, before the race of *homo sapiens* has been able to solve the same problem in the island continent.

It is an interesting question whether this Australian lamprey is not a lingering example of the fish of Miocene ages, and as such may not be considered as an ancestral type of European lampreys. A sea lamprey that I examined alive, caught in the salmon nets of the tidal estuary, had a distinct tendency to swell at either side of the head, as if the pouch might be forthcoming in time of actual necessity. If the Australian type is not the absolute ancestor of the British genera, it is at least reasonable to suppose that it is an older form, and that the divergent genera and species have descended along different lines in the great life struggle. That the pouch of the antipodean lamprey is intended for the storage of water is a fact that can hardly be doubted by any one who has seen the species amid its peculiar surroundings; without the

additional capacity, indeed, the fish could not survive the oft-recurring periods of drought. Such a condition of things is unknown in our own more humid climate, therefore the modification has practically ceased to exist in the structure of the lampreys that we possess.

For several years past the annual migrations of lamperns in the Severn water system have fallen off to a considerable extent, partly, it may be, owing to the rainfall having been below the average, and a consequent failing of the springs which contribute to swell the waters of the Severn, and perhaps from the tapping of the Verniew for the water supply of Liverpool. In recent years the condition of the lower part of the Severn estuary has not been such as to improve the passage upwards for migratory fish. The water is held up by the upper locks until the channel is lost, except at high tide, in a sandy waste. As the volume of water from above, from whatever cause, decreases, it is evident that the chances of migratory fish ascending at their various seasons decrease in a corresponding ratio; and the day will perhaps come when the Upper Severn knows its salmon no more.

I confess to a partiality for wandering by the rivers at any season of the year; there is always some form of life, dormant or active, at hand for observation. In winter the mud is swarming with the statoblasts of the infusoria, endless varieties of annelids, and freshwater crustacea. There are in the Teme, for example, quantities of crimson filiform worms dwelling, with bodies half extended from the mud cells in the bank, and so like the red fibres of the free willow roots that the two can hardly be distinguished. Under the microscope this transparent body reveals the simple valve of the heart in the seventh segment propelling the blood through the entire system. The particles of food can be seen in the process of digestion through the alimentary canal, and the nerves are very clearly indicated. The caddis insects, with heads protruding from the straw or cemented cells, crawl at the bottom of the stream, and the ephemera larvæ are restless among the same red willow roots. Occasionally one meets with the formidable-looking larva of the dragon-flies, the head armed with a trunk like a miniature elephant. Never is the water devoid of life. The water ouzel remains on the Teme throughout the winter, searching diligently day by day for the testacea and water-slugs that are its most cherished food. It is a gross libel to accuse these attractive birds of stealing the trout ova; an occasional young fish falls a prey, but mollusca

are the habitual diet, as an examination of the crop invariably proves.

Just where the lamperns await a freshet for their continued ascent, the floods often accumulate with undesired force; the Teme is sometimes a quarter of a mile broad in the vicinity of the flat common-meadows or hams. Above Powick Bridge the hard red banks are riddled with the nests of a colony of sand martins, which return year by year in April to inhabit their subterranean homes. In 1886 one of the greatest floods on record arose in the darkness of night, rushing downwards from the mountain source in the Radnorshire hills with such unexpected violence that every sand martin—barely arrived from the sunny south—was drowned within the cliff. For two years hardly any of the birds could be seen flitting on the surface of the river or through the arches of the old bridge, but now the numbers have again increased. The same river which floods with such extraordinary rapidity, shrinks away almost to nothing in a prolonged drought. Where deep pools are usually found, I walked in the dry bed of the Teme in the summer of 1887.<sup>1</sup> During that season the lamperns might be seen in small groups, keeping body and soul together, so to speak, in shallow puddles cut off from the shrunken stream, until the rising of the waters curtailed their imprisonment. The fish could at this time be easily taken by hand in more than one reach of the river, which was then in the state of an Australian gully in time of drought.

It is nearly ten years since my attention was first drawn to this little river running through the heart of Worcestershire, sometimes a foaming torrent and sometimes but a trickling stream. The Teme rises on the borders of Radnorshire, from Kerry Hill, the remnant of a considerable chain long since denuded and worn away by attrition of the upper surfaces. The entire course is less than a hundred miles. It passes through Knighton, divides Herefordshire from Shropshire, from Leintwardine and Ludlow, and continues *viâ* Tenbury, Clifton, and Knightwick, reaching the Severn two miles below Powick. Few people are aware of the quiet beauty of the valley, hidden deep away in the wilder parts of Worcestershire and Shropshire; it is known only to anglers (the Clun and the Onny both fall into the Teme) and perhaps to otter hunters. But it is a country in every way attractive to naturalists and all lovers of nature. Artists might well turn their attention to the parts lying

<sup>1</sup> At Framilode the Severn was fordable that year at low tide.

between Knightsford Bridge and Tenbury, for the sylvan and river scenery is hardly to be surpassed in all the land.

There is one peculiarity about the Teme and Severn valleys which, I think, accounts fully for the notoriously relaxing climate. During a considerable portion of the year—in the autumn and winter more especially—abnormal quantities of vapour rise from the low-lying grounds flanking the water-side. Looking across the vale from Malvern to the Cotswolds, or *vice versâ*, it is a common thing to find the lowlands absolutely cut off from view by the mists which rise to envelop everything. Night after night the same phenomenon can be observed; and it is only too probable that the enervating climate of the western shires bears a direct relation to the preponderance of mists rising from the heavy marsh lands of the river valleys. Go and search for lamperns in the Teme on a chill November night if you want to experience the full thickness of the miasmatic vapours rising from the heavy land. At sunset fog may be seen rising like heavy steam from the meadows by the waterside. Perhaps the very fact of undrained river marshes emitting malarious moisture is the reason why willows so frequently flourish by the waterside. In the active principle of the plant—salicin—which is obtained directly from the bark of the white willow, is a potent remedy against fever and ague, somewhat of a substitute for the *cinchona* of the tropics. Both these drugs, indeed, afford an illustration of the law of nature, whereby a remedy lies at hand amongst the common vegetation of a given area for the alleviation of such disease as may result directly from injurious climatic influences. The willows by the side of the lower Teme are not so widely distributed without design.

C. PARKINSON.



## *Dreamland.*

IN the dim realm I wandered through,  
 The shadow land of sleep,  
 Came many souls of lovers true,  
 A tryst unknown to keep.

There came the God of Dreams to rule  
 His phantom kingdom o'er,  
 And roses white and wonderful,  
 And ghostly lilies bore.

And as I wandered, loneliest  
 The spirits free among,  
 Unto all those whose love was blest  
 The fairest flowers he flung.

Then I caught his garment's floating hem,  
 Murmuring bitterly:  
 'King, all the daylight is for them—  
 And hast thou naught for me?'

An instant as I stayed him there  
 He looked upon my face,  
 Before his garment's fold of air  
 Melted from my embrace.

Then, swifter than a shadow flies,  
 He passed, and no flower fell—  
 But his eyes were as my lost love's eyes,  
 Looking a last farewell.

MAY KENDALL.

## *Mrs. Juliet.*

BY MRS. ALFRED W. HUNT.

### CHAPTER X.

#### 'THE CARADOC COLLECTION.'

\* The first of all gospels is this, that a lie cannot endure for ever.—*Carlyle.*

**T**HE President and Council of the Devereux Club request the honour of the company of Mrs. Slingsby-Caradoc and friend, at a *soirée* in their rooms on Wednesday, June 17, at ten o'clock, to meet—'

'Oh, Juliet, Juliet! Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth is to be there! They have asked me to meet Princess Elizabeth! It is my "Cathedin" that has brought me this!' And, entirely overcome by her feelings, Mrs. Caradoc sank into a wide hospitable-looking armchair, and fanned herself with the large envelope which had held the card from which she had just been reading. 'I do call this an honour!' she exclaimed, as soon as breath was restored to her. 'What would my poor dear Cradock have said? Well, he has gone where such honours can't reach him, but I should like him to know that they are reaching his widow. I must do something for these Devereux people in return. I tell you what, Juliet; they are quite sure to want as many good drawings for their *soirée* as they can get together. I will buy one—I will buy several—I will write to that Mr. Clifton who came here—you saw him, you know, Juliet, not I, but it's all the same thing. I will write to him and ask what kind of drawings they would be most proud of having to show on that occasion, and then I will go to a sale at Christie's and purchase one or two to lend them.'

'Oh, I don't think I would, aunt,' said Juliet, who foresaw that if her aunt wrote that letter she would infallibly discover

that it was Mr. Congreve who had made the visit of inspection, and not Mr. Clifton.

'And why wouldn't you? I want more good drawings myself. My gallery is now completed; you don't seem to remember that the walls will have to be covered. Oh, Juliet, when they are! What a proud woman I shall be when my gallery is filled from one end to the other with great works, and the Caradoc Collection is a thing that must be seen! I shall never be really happy until it is as well known in other countries as in this. I must have Americans coming—I really must.' She went to her writing-table and began her letter, repeating the words as she wrote them:

"Dear Mr. Clifton, excuse my seeming to address you so familiarly, but since that day when you came to my house and took such a kind interest in my drawings, I have no longer been able to think of you as a stranger." That's rather well expressed, Juliet, isn't it? Don't go rustling your newspaper so; you scatter my ideas.'

It was only too well expressed. Juliet was full of alarm. She had never dared to confess to her aunt that it was not Mr. Clifton who had called, and she dared not do so now.

'Don't rustle that paper so,' said Mrs. Caradoc. 'What are you wanting to find in it, and why need you read papers? I can tell you that there are many people who will not permit young girls even to touch a newspaper.'

'I am only looking to see if any nice sales are coming off at Christie's,' said Juliet nervously.

'I am much obliged for the invitation to the *soirée* of the Devereux Club, which I feel sure that your kindness has procured me,' wrote Mrs. Caradoc; and then once more she cried: 'Juliet, what a noise you are making! Do stop reading a minute. This letter is important, and I must have quiet till it is done. I have told Mr. Clifton that I am going to buy at least another good drawing on purpose to be able to send it there, so I think I may very fairly ask him to be so good as to go round the rooms with me when we are at the *soirée*—I must have some one with me to explain the pictures and the rest of the things. Put down that paper, you are crackling it again. By the bye, what do you want with sales at Christie's?'

'I was thinking that it would be a rather nice way of doing what you want if you were not to write about the drawing, but to go and buy a really good one and send it to the "Devereux" as a loan for their *soirée*, without letting them know that it was

yours. If you did that, you would get a much better idea of its value, for every one would say what he really thought about it; and then, you know, if they were all enthusiastic about its beauty, and full of curiosity and anxiety to discover who could have lent it to them, it would be so delightful to be able to step forward and say, "That drawing is mine!"

'Oh, what a good idea!' exclaimed Mrs. Caradoc enthusiastically. 'It is yours; but I like it immensely.'

'Only, if you do that, you must not write to Mr. Clifton.'

'No, I must not write—they must know nothing about my buying a drawing for them—nothing at all, so there's a penny saved towards the price of it. But, Juliet, I shouldn't like to buy an expensive drawing, and then find it was a bad one; and, you see, my taste is not quite formed—I don't quite know which are good yet.'

There was something so pathetic in the look of helplessness and distress which overspread Mrs. Caradoc's ample face that even Juliet could not but pity her, and yet at all costs she must be diverted from her intention of writing that letter. Any such letter could not fail to end in bringing to light what must now for ever be kept secret—the fact that, in spite of promises and prohibitions, Juliet and Mr. Congreve had conversed with each other for the space of an hour and more in that very room.

'But you must not buy a bad one; the gentleman who came here that day said you were always safe if you bought one of Turner's Yorkshire drawings, and Christie is going to sell one this very day. You can see all about it here,' and with a last mighty rustle she doubled up the paper and gave it to her aunt, this time receiving no scolding about noise.

"'Roche Abbey, Yorkshire, by J. M. W. Turner,  $15\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ ,'" read Mrs. Caradoc in great spirits. 'Well, my dear, we will go and buy it!' A moment later she said: 'But if I buy it, we can't keep the secret. My name as a collector is so well known—and think how that will raise the price!'

'Send Mr. Hastings,' suggested Juliet; fear of discovery made Juliet very full of suggestions.

Mr. Hastings was bound over to secrecy, and he not only bought the 'Roche Abbey' and forwarded it to the 'Devereux' without betraying the name of the lender, but was also kind enough to let Mrs. Caradoc buy three or four drawings at his own little place 'at an infinitely less price than he would have accepted from any one who was not gifted with such a singularly fine

appreciation of art.' Kindness of this sort was agreeable to Mrs. Caradoc, nor was Mr. Hastings materially the loser by it. Dressed in a delicate light green silk with a long train of dark green velvet, and blazing in diamonds as usual, Mrs. Caradoc went to the soirée. The rooms were full when she arrived, and her heavy train was almost as much in her own way as in every one else's. Crowds were surging round an easel on which stood her new drawing—she could see that even at a glance—but then crowds were surging in almost every direction.

'Oh, Juliet,' she whispered, 'look, look! Do you see what they are admiring? Oh, I am so happy! Never before had I the least idea how much happiness was to be got out of pictures—drawings I mean—don't let me say "pictures" again, Juliet dear, I thought I had got over that. Give me a hint if you hear me say it again.'

How respectfully some members of the club who happened to be near the door treated her!

'I do believe they think I know as much about art as they do,' she said. Poor lady, she herself secretly almost thought she did, and yet she had not even got to the rudimentary stage of writing and thinking of it as Art with a big A.

It was Art with a very big A at the Devereux Club. Each member seemed to know exactly where every rare Greek coin had been found, and into whose hands it had subsequently passed. Every one's mind was a complete storehouse of numismatic, ceramic, and bibliopagic history. A fish painted by a Japanese artist threw most of them into an ecstasy—three or four scratches with the burin of Méryon satisfied every need of their artistic being. Mrs. Caradoc listened in simple amazement, and somehow or other contrived to learn for the first time how many more ways there were of achieving greatness than it had ever entered into her mind to conceive. One gentleman stood by her side for some time who had a book that was unique, and the fame of it and of him was quickly noised abroad in the room. Another was there whose hobby was old Venetian glass—one collected this and another that, but every one collected something, or was an authority on some point. How the jargon of Art with the stupendously large A surprised her, and what a widening of her mental horizon took place when she found that even a collection of nearly three thousand book-plates was a thing of rare importance, especially as it contained one of the great chancellor whose shoulders some people are trying to cover with the mantle of Shakespeare! Then she was incessantly puzzled by fragments

of talk which caught her ears and made her wonder what manner of talk this was, and what manner of world this strange, strange art world could be. Bas-relief roundels, plaquettes, intaglios, cloisonné enamels, milky crackle, creamy crackle, mezzotints, earlier manners, and later manners; she listened and wondered whether she too would ever be obliged to have such things and talk about them, and the bits of stories that she heard, which seemed so madly foolish and unlike everything that she had been accustomed to regard as sensible at all, utterly completed her bewilderment. 'Why this impasto?' he said (a passing gentleman was the speaker); 'why this impasto? Is a maiden's cheek like a gravel walk?' And another singular thing was being said on the other side of her—even a stranger still—'Oh, my dear fellow, it's no use to try to get Lubbock to interest himself in saving that; I don't believe he cares one pin for any building that is composed of more than three stones at the very most;' and the speaker, who, in spite of his language, did not look at all mad, passed onwards, but only to make place for more and more persons interested in things which she had never heard of anyone being interested in before, and using words which, long as she had lived, had never yet met her ears. Good Heavens! what a noisy, confusing world it was! Then she arose in her strength and shook off all the babble of high matters which was oppressing her so. Her own duty was clear, her way plain. No one could attain eminence of any kind without singleness of purpose. She meant to form an unrivalled collection of water-colour drawings which should hereafter be known as the Caradoc Collection, and possibly be one day bequeathed in its entirety to the nation, and as for all these other collectors of trumpery things, disfigured by the dust and canker of ages, let them run about comparing their little odds and ends of unenviable property, and rave about them as they liked, she wanted none of them.

Juliet was by her side; Juliet saw her shake off the oppression which had for some time overmastered her, and prepare to advance farther into the room. Juliet saw this with alarm—she was filled with terror of her aunt's discovering that Congreve secret; her one hope of safety was keeping Mrs. Caradoc away from Mr. Clifton. Mrs. Caradoc, however, began to speak of asking for Mr. Clifton's escort round the rooms. So far as getting through the crowd was concerned she needed no escort. She moved about like a well-built punt among a squadron of outriggers. All gave



way before the massiveness, and bulk, and importance of her presence, and the heavy-hearted Juliet followed meekly in her wake before the crowd had time to close in on the space which she had just cleared.

'Let us go and see that little drawing on the easel,' said Mrs. Caradoc; it was her own 'Roche Abbey,' and she knew it, but the time had not yet come to reveal that secret.

'Have you seen that little Turner on the easel? Did you look at it?' said one gentleman to another as Mrs. Caradoc walked by. Her 'Roche Abbey' was going to be discussed. She signalled to her consort, Juliet. Juliet's arm bore the red mark of that sudden signal for fully half an hour. They arrested their progress to listen—that inevitably arrested the progress of the two speakers, so Mrs. Caradoc heard every word. 'Like it! H'm, I'm not one of his admirers. It's no more like Nature than the rest of his things. They did right to put that drawing on an easel—no one would have noticed it on the walls. Even when his drawings were fresh painted they used to look no better than bits of blank paper in an exhibition. For my part, I wouldn't give a button for any drawing, or picture either, which doesn't hit you a slap in the face the moment you look at it.'

'Have you seen that magnificent little Turner on the easel?' asked some one else just as Mrs. Caradoc's patience was becoming exhausted. 'It is a marvellous example!'

Once more her eyes beamed with gladness, not that the former speaker had shaken her faith, but praise is so sweet.

'Seen it! I should think so! I saw it at Christie's, and would have bought it if things had not been so bad in the City. What a price it fetched! It was knocked down to Hastings.'

'For some great collector, no doubt.'

'There are moments in the life of every man,' as some great author has remarked, and this was one of Mrs. Caradoc's moments. Surely this, too, was the moment to advance and proclaim herself the owner of this 'cynosure of neighbouring eyes.' She walked up to the easel, partly intending to do it, but an artist was bending over 'Roche Abbey,' and she felt that she must hear what he was saying. These were the words she caught:—

'I suppose you want the orthodox brown generalisation; but things in Nature haven't got that easy, convenient brown spread over all the near objects—they are full of all sorts of lovely colours.'

'It is not only the foreground that I am objecting to,' said a

gentleman by his side; 'the drawing is a mass of untruth from beginning to end, the composition is frightfully artificial, the trees have been specially grown, or pruned to suit it——'

There was a movement among the crowd, and the two gentlemen by the easel had to make place for others, but just as she was parted from them Mrs. Caradoc saw that the artist was Mr. Clifton.

'It was Mr. Clifton who was speaking up as he ought for my Turner, Juliet,' she said. 'Let us go to him. Come quickly.'

'Oh, don't let us think of it,' replied Juliet. 'Why should we? Your dress will be ruined in this crowd; mine is nearly torn off my back. We are sure to come across him later.'

'Come!' exclaimed Mrs. Caradoc imperiously, and she made a heavy plunge forward, leaving it to Juliet to follow her or not. Juliet did follow, tremulous with fear. Suddenly she heard a voice she knew say:

'Oh, yes, I have seen the Sangrado, and I hate it. It's all very well for the people who like to write Art with a big A and Nature with a small n; no doubt it pleases them, but it doesn't please me. Give me that divine "Roche Abbey."'

Congreve was the speaker, and, arrested in mid-career by these grateful words, Mrs. Caradoc was standing *bouche b ante* in front of him. It was not only his words which had stopped her, it was the sight of a lady who was with him who wore diamonds of such splendour that they eclipsed Mrs. Caradoc's own. 'Who was she? and with that amatoor actor too!' Mr. Congreve came forward, shook hands with Mrs. Caradoc, and, nothing daunted by past repression, said:

'May I introduce Lady Gwynedd Peveril to you? She wants to tell you how much she admires your contributions to the exhibition.'

Diamonds met diamonds, and Lady Gwynedd at once spoke with the greatest admiration of the Caradoc drawings.

'And the "Cathedin" is yours too, I find. I saw it at the Reynolds Club last week. It is wonderfully fine. Mr. Congreve tells me that you have a great many other beautiful drawings. I want you to be so kind as to let me come to see them.'

'When all I have lent to different exhibitions have come home perhaps, but not now. So many are away, you see. There are such ugly gaps on my walls—I couldn't—you couldn't——'

'Oh, but indeed I could, quite well; and Mr. Congreve assures me that you have some that are most beautiful,' persisted Lady Gwynedd.

'But he doesn't know—Mr. Congreve doesn't know. Mr. Clifton has seen them, and he can tell you what I have. Where is he? He was here two minutes ago, and I was just trying to catch him. I should like to show you what I have, of course, but I couldn't let you come all the way to my house for nothing. Mr. Congreve, can't you find Mr. Clifton for me?'

All this while Juliet was becoming more and more alarmed, and once or twice, though at the risk of being seen by the others, she even cast appealing glances at Congreve. If he would but keep silence, perhaps even yet there was a chance of averting this great danger. He saw that there was something that she was anxious to say to him, and for a minute or two made no answer.

'Do you hear, Mr. Congreve?' urged Mrs. Caradoc. 'I want you to find Mr. Clifton for me. He must be found, for he is the only person who can tell Lady Gwynedd Peveril what I have left on my walls. He is a member of the Devereux Club, you know, Lady Gwynedd, and he came to pick out what was to be sent to this exhibition. Didn't he, Juliet?'

Juliet looked ready to sink into the earth. Her lips were moving with an answer, when Lady Gwynedd, who vaguely saw that there was something wrong somewhere, broke in with an entreaty to be allowed to pay Mrs. Caradoc's collection a visit in any case, for she was sure that it was well worth seeing.

'And I may bring my friend Mr. Congreve with me? I see you know him too.'

'Oh, certainly,' replied Mrs. Caradoc, who was softening even to Congreve, now that he was coming in the train of a titled lady. 'I should like Mr. Congreve or any other member of this club to see what I have. They ought to know my pictures.'

'Thank you,' said Congreve, looking round embarrassed. 'I will come with great pleasure—but, Mrs. Caradoc, I have seen your drawings once. It was I who made the selection for this exhibition, not Mr. Clifton. He had such a number of places to go to to borrow things, that it was impossible for one man to do it all, so some of the members were deputed to assist in the work. I was sent to you by the club. I should have asked them to send someone else,' he added apologetically, 'only until I was in your drawing-room and saw your niece I did not know it was yours. You had made a change in your name.'

Mrs. Slingsby-Caradoc could not but remember that when she had been acquainted with Congreve she had gone by the name of Cradock. So far so good, but had Lady Gwynedd heard this? She glanced at her in great confusion. How horrible if she had!

Lady Gwynedd had heard without hearing. She was looking about her while these people who were about to make themselves useful to her settled things. She didn't want to know what any of them had been doing to their insignificant little names. No, Lady Gwynedd was not attending, so Mrs. Caradoc, after darting a furious look at Juliet, which pierced her through and through, hastily concluded the arrangement with Lady Gwynedd and Mr. Congreve for the next day.

Thus she seemed to have condoned the crime which had been committed, but Juliet knew that Mrs. Caradoc was a person who could bide her time.

'Do you admire the Turner on the easel?' said Mrs. Caradoc in the most friendly manner to Mr. Congreve.

'Admire it! I should think so! In some respects it is the finest Turner I have ever seen.'

'What, finer than the "Cathedin"?'"

'In some respects it is——'

'Oh, don't say that!' cried Mrs. Caradoc in her anguish; 'please don't say that, for I only gave eleven hundred guineas for this, and the "Cathedin" cost me three thousand!'

And thus was the announcement which was to have been made so picturesquely, launched forth.

'It is yours! I had no idea it was yours!' said Lady Gwynedd, who was but slightly surprised.

'You are fortunate!' exclaimed Congreve. 'Lady Gwynedd and I have been admiring that drawing for the last half-hour. Your collection bids fair to be matchless.'

How could Mrs. Caradoc cherish resentment after that? It was so sweet to hear the praise of her new Turner; to be asked what tint of colour she best liked as a background in a picture gallery; to go from her Cotman to her Dewint, and then on to her Girtins and Paul Sandbys with a beautiful Lady Gwynedd and a prominent member of the Devereux Club. For Lady Gwynedd was beautiful. Tall, graceful, and well proportioned, she glided through the rooms by Mrs. Caradoc's side, and watch as that lady might, she could not detect one sign of superciliousness or mere temporary condescension. Doubtless this was going to be an enduring friendship, founded on community of tastes. Engaged as she was with Lady Gwynedd, Mrs. Caradoc did not trouble herself about the young folks. Juliet's present must be under her own supervision; Juliet's future a matter of her own arrangement, for one touch of Art had made the whole world kin,

and to Mrs. Caradoc at present the whole world was herself and the aristocracy of her native land.

'You had not told Mrs. Caradoc that I called instead of Mr. Clifton?' said Congreve.

'No, I had not,' Juliet replied in much embarrassment. 'She did not ask who came, or I should have said you did, of course; but she assumed that it was Mr. Clifton, and somehow, as I did not set her right at first, I had to let her go on thinking so.'

'I know Mrs. Caradoc did not wish me to call. I hope she understands that nothing would have induced me to go that day if I had been aware that Mrs. Slingsby-Caradoc was the same person as Mrs. Cradock.'

'Forget about it!' said Juliet. 'She treats you quite differently now.'

Mrs. Caradoc looked round and saw them talking earnestly. She did not object to their doing so; she had all but forgotten her dislike of him. Why should she object to him if Lady Gwynedd didn't?

'Have you known Mr. Congreve long?' she asked that lady.

'I? No. Four or five years—that's all, more's the pity.'

'Why the pity?'

'Because he is so delightful and clever. Oh, look, Mrs. Caradoc, Princess Elizabeth has come, and I do believe the President is taking her to see your Turner!'

There was a moment when Mrs. Caradoc thought that she was going to faint.

'Shall we move a little nearer to it?' she said as soon as she could speak at all.

'Move nearer!' exclaimed Lady Gwynedd with lofty disregard of her wishes. 'Certainly not. The crowd was unpleasant before, and it will be twenty times greater now. No; let us go into one of the deserted rooms and enjoy the pictures in peace while we have a chance.'

'I mean to stay here,' said Mrs. Caradoc decisively. Was she to lose the possible opportunity of hearing some speech which might be preserved as an heirloom in her family for ever, because a selfish fine lady wanted to run away into an empty room to look at pictures? What sensible person cares a pin for anyone's pictures but his own? 'No; I stay here,' repeated Mrs. Caradoc, planting herself 'firm as Old Albion's battered rocks.'

'Then may I take Miss Caradoc with me for a little turn?'

She might have taken her to dance on the Brocken for any-

thing Mrs. Caradoc then cared; so Juliet, and Lady Gwynedd, and Mr. Congreve strolled away with the *clef des champs* in their hands; and Mrs. Caradoc waited in conscious humility to see the Princess approach her drawing and hear her utter the longed-for words. But what was the President of the 'Devereux' doing? He was walking past her Turner, and conducting the royal lady into another room; a room into which Mrs. Caradoc had not yet penetrated; a room with easels in it on which were works of art which were apparently just as much appreciated as any of the others. He led her to one of these easels, and the crowd which was there respectfully made way, but it got between Mrs. Caradoc and the desire of her eyes, and nothing was left to her but to wait. It seemed quite twenty minutes before the illustrious procession came out again. What could there have been in that room to arrest its attention so long? The room was now all but deserted, so Mrs. Caradoc went to see. She went to the easel by which the Princess had been standing. She saw on it a landscape—that is to say, something that was being called a landscape, but looked much more like a large and very dirty palette which after a long and hard day's work had been thrust by some one into a gold frame. Could that ugly spread of greasy colour be meant for a picture? Masses of treacly-looking oil colour had been squeezed out apparently direct from the tube on a canvas. What virulent emerald greens! what startling Prussian blues! and not a trace of drawing, or knowledge of any kind to be seen anywhere! Was it possible that the great connoisseurs of the 'Devereux' admired that? She drew nearer to where some of these high priests of art were still paying their meed of adoration. There was much more unanimity here than there had been by the easel in which she was interested.

'How suggestive!' said one with much fervour. Mrs. Caradoc almost glared at him. How dared he say that that picture was suggestive? What could such a wholesale use of colours suggest but a very long bill at Roberson's?

'A—h!' sighed another in the absolute plenitude of his delight. 'The pathos of it is divine!'

'You really admire it?' asked Mrs. Caradoc. The gentleman was a stranger to her, but she could refrain from speech no longer. He slowly raised his eyes to her and said:

'Indeed I do, madam. It is a marvellous picture—simply mar-vell-ous!'

'Well, that is just what I was thinking myself.'



'Ah, indeed!' he half said and half sighed. His taciturnity ruffled her, so she added:

'There is the making of a picture in it, no doubt, just as there is in a colour-box; indeed, I should not be surprised if there was the making of two or three pictures there, for the colours are laid on so thick.'

'Excuse me, madam,' said he, turning to get away from her, her irreverence was so painful to him.

'Oh, but you must not think that I am a person who does not care for pictures!' she exclaimed, for this was a point on which she could not consent to be misunderstood, even by a misguided stranger. 'I have eight very important drawings here, and I am really anxious to learn all that I can before you go away, so would you mind telling me why you admire this—this picture?'

"Admire" it, madam! I do much more than admire it—I feel it most profoundly. It is superb—simply superb!'

'It is the colour, perhaps?' she suggested, for she was beginning to dally with art terms.

'No, madam, it is not. The colour is rich, sensuous, robust—colour enough, perhaps just a trifle crude.'

'Surely it can't be the drawing—there is none!'

'No, it is not the drawing. I don't think Sangrado cares about drawing.'

'Then it must be the subject,' she said, with a polite wish to come to his aid.

'Oh no; it is just a subject that anyone might have painted—that's part of the charm.'

'But do excuse me—if it is neither the colour, nor the drawing, nor the subject that you like it for, what is it?'

'For itself. It has a charm which is irresistible—a subtle charm which it would be almost profanation to attempt to analyse,' he answered with perfect satisfaction; and then, lest she should try to draw him into further speech, he took one lingering last look at the picture on the easel and departed.

Mrs. Caradoc, too, hurried back to the other rooms, telling herself that if she lived to be a hundred never would she be able to 'atton' her mind to such a picture as that! No sooner was she there than she heard praises of her drawings, but they seemed to praise everything here, and she felt she must find Juliet. It was three-quarters of an hour since she had parted company with her.

'Where is Lady Gwynedd Peveril?' repeated one acquaintance to whom Mrs. Caradoc put that question. 'She is on a sofa at

the corner of the large room. Shall I escort you to her? There is a very good mirror near her, "and subtly of herself contemplative," her ladyship is passing the time very pleasantly.' He had forgotten that he was talking to Mrs. Caradoc.

She looked at him with eyes round as the O of Giotto—did he understand his own words? Did any of these people understand their own words? Would she herself have to use the same kind of unintelligible jargon before she could be properly accredited as an authority in Art? He guided Mrs. Caradoc whither she would be, repeating to her as he went favourable criticisms that he had heard of her drawings. Once more she was happy—once more it was the best of all possible worlds. The possession of a few bits of professionally stained paper had completely changed the aspect of her existence.

## CHAPTER XI.

### 'I WILL WATCH HER.'

'Tis a fine thing to keep one's anger in stock by one.

*Grief à la Mode.*

MRS. CARADOC went home from the 'Devereux' minus an illusion. She had believed that there was one distinctly recognised right track in art, and that her feet were treading it. She had believed that every one with money and will to buy pictures could always buy wisely under wise direction. But what was wise direction? Alas! even in art false gods were set up, and false priests went about seeking to make converts to their worship. It was hard to have so much to contend with in this world.

She was sitting next morning with puzzled face and puzzled mind. Even the usual money test of value failed here, for one set of people were willing to run up a drawing to thousands which another set of people thought all but worthless. Then, too, what was to be done about Juliet? Such duplicity was more than Mrs. Caradoc could bear! Juliet should go away for a while, if not for ever. Let her take a situation as governess, and see how she liked earning her own living—or let her go and be companion to some other lady, and then she would soon find that her poor old Aunt Katherine, of whose unkindness she was always more or less complaining, was in reality not unkind at all. 'Not that I will take her back when she has found it out,' thought Mrs. Caradoc, who always lashed herself up into a state of still greater anger by

'thinking things over.' 'When she goes, she goes for good; and as for me, I think I shall just marry Sir Gregory, and I'll have a Bransby, for I must have a girl about me now I am so used to having one. I ought, perhaps, to have had a Bransby before.'

By 'a Bransby' she meant a daughter of Mr. Bransby, and Mr. Bransby was a general practitioner living at Scarborough, the husband of Mr. Cradock's only sister. There had been a long-enduring quarrel between Mr. Cradock and his sister, and a still more enduring one between him and his sister's husband, because that husband spoke contemptuously of the 'Sympathetic Pills' as quack medicine, and absolutely declined to make use of them in his practice. Mr. Cradock thought that it was his brother-in-law's 'dooty to push them pills,' and that his refusing to do so was 'a great slight.' For some years it remained 'a great slight,' and there was only a considerable amount of coolness between the Cradocks and the Bransbys, but gradually it became an 'unpardonable insult to a noble utilitarian invention,' and Mr. Cradock declared 'that no power on earth should ever induce him to forgive that Bransby!' Furthermore, Mr. Cradock had said: 'If Bransby won't acknowledge the merit of my pill, he shall have no share in any of the money it has brought;' and Mr. Cradock had kept his word. The name of Bransby was not even distantly alluded to in his will.

'Perhaps they have been punished enough!' thought Mrs. Caradoc as she sat meditating on these old cares and vexations. 'Anyhow, my going among them a little, if I take it into my head to go, or having one of them here now and then, or altogether, in place of Juliet, does not bind me to do anything more for them. I have no doubt they will be glad enough to let me have one of the girls if I want her. They are quite willing to make up the quarrel, I know.' She had reason to know, she thought, for Mr. and Mrs. Bransby had twice or thrice made little advances to her since she had been left a widow. She had not responded to these advances, believing it a religious duty to carry on her dear demised Cradock's resentments for him, punctually and inexorably. Cradock, however, had a long-standing dispute with Juliet's father too, so perhaps it would not be acting in a manner that was altogether discordant with his present wishes if she made a whip of one of these sets of snakes with which to lash the other. There were three Miss Bransbys, and report said that they were all very beautiful. If they were half as beautiful as report said, Mrs. Caradoc thought they could not but adorn her triumphal car; at all events

they would amply fulfil her purpose of humbling Juliet. Something must be done to punish Juliet, for the measure of her iniquities was full. Mrs. Caradoc took half a sheet of writing-paper and wrote in pencil:—

‘*Mem.*: To write to Sir Gregory Jervaulx and say that he may return to London.

‘To write to Mrs. George Bransby and ask her to send one of her daughters to stay with me.

‘To go to Baker Street bazaar to buy some little cheap presents for them.’

At this moment Juliet entered the room with an open letter in her hand. Juliet had been avoiding Mrs. Caradoc all the morning for fear of being asked for an explanation of her conduct in the Congreve matter, and Mrs. Caradoc had observed it.

‘I have just had a note from Lady Gwynedd Peveril, aunt,’ she said.

‘You have just had a note from Lady Gwynedd Peveril! Why you?’

‘We had a good deal of talk last night while we were waiting for you, and she discovered that I was very fond of acting.’

‘I could have told her that,’ muttered the old lady ominously, ‘*re-markably* fond—more’s the pity!’

Juliet glanced at her uneasily, but, as she said no more, tried to dismiss the idea that her words pointed to anything beyond their obvious and innocent meaning, and continued: ‘She has written to ask me to act with her in some private theatricals at Peveril House.’

Mrs. Caradoc was so surprised that the bitter scolding which she was intending to administer to her niece for her treacherous silence was for the moment forgotten in amazement.

‘She wants you to act at Peveril House! That’s a great honour for you!’

‘But am I to do it?’

‘Of course you are! Why not? I never expected that we should get the run of such great houses so quickly.’

Juliet laid down Lady Gwynedd’s letter beside her aunt, intending to glide away. She felt very uncomfortable with Mrs. Caradoc that morning, and was most anxious to avoid all occasions of speech with her, but while stooping to put down the letter quick eyes caught sight of the memorandum to write and ask Mrs. Bransby to let one of her daughters come. ‘Aunt,’ she said,

'what are you going to do? Are you really going to invite one of the Bransbys here?' For well she knew what that invitation portended.

'Why should I not? I think it is high time that I made the acquaintance of some of my poor husband's other nieces. I shall not reproach you—reproaches are useless; but one thing I will say, and that is, that even Mr. Congreve is a great deal more honourable than you! I dare say he was quite as anxious to keep me in the dark as you were, but he couldn't bring himself to let me go on saying that Mr. Clifton had been here when he hadn't, as you did. Such scruples never seem to trouble you.'

Juliet burst into tears and humbly entreated her aunt's forgiveness. 'The deception had made her miserable,' she said. 'She had never intended to deceive her aunt, but not having told her the truth at first, she had never dared to tell it afterwards.'

'And why not, pray? And why did you not tell the truth at first? I have always been such a kind, indulgent aunt to you, that I can't see why you need have hesitated to confess anything to me. Why did you hesitate? You must either have felt that you had done something very very bad indeed, worse than I know, or you must have been afraid of me. Which was it?'

'I was afraid,' sobbed Juliet, 'I was afraid of what you would say, and perhaps do.'

'Oh indeed—it is pleasant to me to hear that! I call it a slur on my kindness. I can only say, if you are so afraid of me and find me so extremely difficult to live with, you had much better leave me. I quite feel that we ought to part, and you will not be surprised, I hope, if after some reflection I ask you to make your home elsewhere. I do not quite ask you to do that yet—I shall take a few days more to make up my mind.'

'Don't send me away,' pleaded Juliet; 'I have nowhere to go to, and I want to stay with you. I am most grateful to you for all you have done for me already; I am indeed. Forgive me this time and I will try to please you better.'

Straightforwardness is what pleases me. I don't say what I will do—I will think it over; but though no reproach shall pass my lips, I have the worst opinion of you after this; so there!'

'So there' put the last touch to Juliet's distress. She fled to the stillness of her chamber to make herself miserable by wondering what Aylesbury would think of her when he heard that she had been turned out of her aunt's house, and why.

An hour or two later Lady Gwynedd Peveril glided in

'Where is Miss Caradoc?' she asked almost immediately. 'She has had my letter, of course. I thought that even though I was coming in the afternoon, I had better write to give her time to make up her mind.'

'It is my mind that is the important one,' observed the old lady rather grimly; young people had such odd ways of expressing themselves nowadays.

'Then your mind, Mrs. Caradoc. I hope you will let her take a part in our play.'

'Some plays are so queer,' said Mrs. Caradoc meditatively.

'Oh, but this is quite the kind of play that any girl could take her mother to see,' answered Lady Gwynedd.

'And it is not to be on theatrical boards?' continued Mrs. Caradoc, who had not in the least understood what Lady Gwynedd had just said.

'It is to be in my own house, as proper as proper can be, and as quiet. Don't say no.'

Mrs. Caradoc had never for one moment thought of saying no, but imagined that delay enhanced the value of consent.

'She will have Mr. Congreve to help her with her part—he is helping all of us. Oh, by the bye, he said he could not come here with me to-day; he had some other engagement.'

'Mr. Congreve!' exclaimed Mrs. Caradoc; 'I had no idea that he was going to be there.'

'Oh, but he is the very life and soul of the whole thing! The play would be nothing if he were not there to help us. Don't you want him to be there? Don't you like him? You must like him.'

'I have no opinion of him,' replied Mrs. Caradoc, using a north-country form to express that she had a bad one, and she pursed up her lips as if that settled the whole matter.

'I don't know anything about your opinion of him,' exclaimed Lady Gwynedd almost contemptuously; 'I only know that he is just the most interesting, charming, clever, good, delightful——'

'He is all but an actor,' said Mrs. Caradoc, with the greatest repugnance.

'He will soon be quite one, I hope, and I should like to know what he could be that is better. However, I don't intend to discuss him or stand up for him. I can only say that he is a friend of mine—a great friend. I am going to act with him; will you let your niece act too?'

'You want an answer at once—quite at once?' asked Mrs.



Caradoc nervously. This great lady had such a masterful way with her that she altogether deprived Mrs. Caradoc of all power of thinking.

Seeing that she was still silent, Lady Gwynedd said: 'You don't like Miss Caradoc to do this. We had better give up the idea. Don't let us say any more about it.'

'Oh, but why?' cried Mrs. Caradoc in despair, for, much as she had hitherto disliked Congreve, she was not at all sure that she intended to continue to dislike him, and she disliked Juliet's losing the honour of acting in worshipful society at Peveril House infinitely more. 'I want to say more about it. I want to say that she will come—that she will be delighted to come. If you don't object to Mr. Congreve, why should I?'

'Why, indeed? It is a privilege and an honour to know him. He won't go everywhere, I can assure you. There is no man who is more run after. Where is Miss Caradoc? If she is going to take a part, she must be quick and learn it, and come to the rehearsal to-morrow afternoon. She ought not to be later than half-past two—stay, she had better come to luncheon. You are sure that you are not saying yes when you want to say no?' for Lady Gwynedd had suddenly perceived a new cloud on Mrs. Caradoc's brow. It was only that she wanted to go to luncheon too.

Having settled this business, they went to the picture gallery. Lady Gwynedd was graciously pleased to be delighted, and once more all went well.

Next day Juliet went to luncheon and rehearsal, and for more than a week afterwards she every day did the same thing, but never did the day come when Lady Gwynedd, out of pure desire to see more of Mrs. Caradoc, said: 'Won't your aunt come to luncheon some day too, and see how we are getting on with our play?'

'Does she never say anything about my going to some of these rehearsals or luncheons?' Mrs. Caradoc asked Juliet, and there was a great deal of discontent in her voice.

'You can go to the performance, of course, if you like,' answered Juliet guardedly.

'That's nonsense, Juliet. How can I go to the performance if she doesn't invite me?'

'I thought you knew. It's not an invitation thing—it's to get some money for a charity, and anyone can go who buys a ticket. Some people have taken a quantity.'

Mrs. Caradoc rose up in her indignation. 'I take tickets for

her performances! I will take no tickets! I think it a most extraordinary thing that she should expect me to do such a thing.'

'Oh, she doesn't expect you,' explained Juliet; 'she doesn't expect anyone—only she is very glad when they do, because, you see, it helps the charity.'

'There you go, Juliet, always ready to take a part with other people against me! If she doesn't expect me to take a ticket, how does she expect me to get one when she is not sending one? She must know that I shall be anxious to see how you acquit yourself. Does she actually expect to profit by your acting, and not send your own aunt a ticket? She ought to send me several, and I have a great mind—a very great mind—to write to her and say so.'

'Oh, you couldn't!' cried Juliet in alarm.

'And how do you know what I can do, pray?'

That was the worst of it—Juliet didn't.

'Give her a day or two longer, aunt,' she said; but Mrs. Caradoc made no reply, and Juliet did not know whether she would wait to express her anger or not.

Mrs. Caradoc sat without speaking for some time, and then rose up with the air of one who had come to a decision, went to her writing-table, and wrote a long letter. She put this letter in an envelope and addressed it. Juliet watched her all the time in great anxiety. Even from her seat that was half across the room Juliet thought she could see the word 'Scarborough' as Mrs. Caradoc held up the envelope to look at what she had just written.

It was so important to Juliet to stay where she was under the shelter of her aunt's roof until her husband came home. What could she do to persuade Mrs. Caradoc not to send that letter

'Aunt,' she said pitifully, 'you *have* written. Don't send your letter just yet. Wait a week—do wait.'

'And what am I to wait for, pray?'

'Aunt, I want to talk to you—to tell you all about it—how he happened to come that day, and what he——'

'Never mind that just now, my dear,' replied Mrs. Caradoc with freezing politeness. 'This is rather a particular letter, and I want to read it over again and see if I have said all I ought.' So she took it out, and Juliet had to resign herself to seeing her read it.

'I must do my best to get work of some kind,' thought Juliet. 'She is going to turn me out of her house, and I am so foolishly unfit to gain my living.'

When the letter had been read, Mrs. Caradoc locked it away with much solemnity in her desk and walked out of the room. Next time Juliet went to rehearsal she took with her her ill-furnished little purse, and tried to buy a ticket for Mrs. Caradoc, intending to present it to her as a gift from Lady Gwynedd. Alas! the tickets, all and sundry, were sold. Then she begged permission to bring her aunt to the dress rehearsal.

‘I ought to have thought of that myself,’ remarked Lady Gwynedd. ‘I hope I should before the time came. Yes, do ask her to the dress rehearsal—it will be just as good as the play itself—lots of people are coming to it. Dear Miss Caradoc,’ for something in Juliet’s face touched her, ‘I don’t think that poor old aunt of yours is so very kind at all times—she leads you rather a bad life now and then, doesn’t she?’

‘Sometimes.’

‘Don’t mind her. It’s only because she is going to leave you all her money. People who know that they are going to do something very good for you in the end have a great way of making you thoroughly miserable in the mean time—they think they have a right.’

Juliet shook her head. She had no such expectation.

‘I don’t like to see you looking so unhappy. You are unhappy, I am sure,’ said Lady Gwynedd kindly.

‘Yes, but not about that only,’ replied Juliet. ‘I have worse things to bear than anything my poor aunt can say or do.’

So she had. The Indian news was growing more and more alarming. Delhi was in the hands of the rebels, every European in it had been massacred, and that part of the country which was the most dangerous was the very part to which Aylesbury had gone. Youth, however, is strangely buoyant, and there were days when Juliet quite shared the confidence of the English newspapers, though even they were at last beginning to regard the mutiny as a thing of importance.

When she returned to Berkeley Square she found Mrs. Caradoc sitting with the fatal letter before her. She was adding a long postscript, and looked much pleased with herself.

‘So you are back!’ she exclaimed. ‘I don’t think much of that Lady Gwynedd of yours! With hundreds of tickets to give away, not to send one to me!’ Mrs. Caradoc knew that they were to be sold, but preferred to view the matter in this light.

‘She wants you to go with me on Thursday evening. You will see the dress rehearsal.’

Much mollified by this, Mrs. Caradoc locked up her letter again without finishing her postscript. 'Perhaps she means to be civil—perhaps it is extra civil,' she murmured. 'Of course it is a much more intimate thing to go to a rehearsal, and it is the dress rehearsal.'

On the appointed evening she convoyed Juliet to Peveril House, and almost felt nervous when Juliet left her to go to the green-room, and she had to make her way into the theatre alone.

'This way, madam,' said the servant, seeing that Mrs. Caradoc seemed inclined to follow her niece.

What a splendid theatre Lady Gwynedd had! It could easily seat three hundred people. Mrs. Caradoc gazed round in the greatest admiration, hastily admitted to herself that anyone who had such a theatre as that had a right to be a little haughty, pardoned all the wrong that Lady Gwynedd had done her, and, nervously dropping into two or three of her ladyship's chairs, smoothed her own voluminous skirts, and then once more looked around—this time to see if she could comfort herself by thinking that not a soul in the room except her hostess had such good diamonds as her own. No one had; and a consciousness of worth took possession of her which was unspeakably grateful. There was a very distinguished audience. Mrs. Caradoc could recognise that, even without the assistance she derived from listening to the conversation of two ladies who sat near her. She never once thought of the play—she scarcely looked at the stage—the spectators were a thousand times more interesting to her. She now began to think that she would certainly like to buy a ticket for the performance—indeed it was rapidly assuming the appearance of a duty to do so. The next thing she heard was: 'You can't get a seat now either for love or for money—all the tickets were sold a week ago!'

Then it was too late! And now Mrs. Caradoc began to feel very angry with Lady Gwynedd for not forcing her to take a ticket while yet there was time.

The performance over, actors and actresses mingled with the spectators, and everyone seemed pleased to have a word with Mr. Congreve. Had he been acting? Mrs. Caradoc had not been attending to the stage, but she almost thought he had. What a fuss all these fine ladies and gentlemen seemed to make about him! It would be well for her to make a fuss too, she thought. Presently Juliet came.

'Where is Lady Gwynedd, Juliet?' said she. 'I wonder she does not come to speak to me!'

'She has such a number of people to speak to, aunt; you have no idea how many.'

At this moment Lady Gwynedd came by, nodded to Mrs. Caradoc, and said to Juliet, who was standing in the narrow way between the two rows of chairs: 'Miss Caradoc, I hope you will see that your aunt has some supper. You know your way about. Will you take her?' and having said that, she sailed gracefully onwards with two or three ladies and gentlemen.

'Explain this strange conduct to me, Juliet,' exclaimed the old lady angrily. 'Why am I made of such small account? Why am I to be huddled off to the supper-room with you when there are plenty of gentlemen about?'

'Hush! aunt, do take care,' whispered Juliet anxiously.

'I am taking care, but she ought to have depooted a gentleman! There is no scarcity of them.'

'It's not a ceremonious affair to-night. No one is taking any one in—they just go anyhow. You see it is only a rehearsal after all.'

'Don't educate me, Juliet, I beg.'

Juliet did so wish her aunt would not speak so loud. Every one was talking very eagerly, but some one might hear.

'She had a gentleman with her—she ought to resign him to one of her guests—she does not want anyone to escort her—she is at home!'

'Aunt, that was the Duke of Wessex, Lady Gwynedd's brother. I saw the Duchess sitting beside you. She is gone now!'

'And a good thing too!' mentally added poor Juliet.

'Really! Not really?'

'Yes, really. They are very pleasant people. I have seen them at luncheon here.'

'Juliet! Juliet! What will the world come to? I can't allow you to be so disrespectful. "Pleasant people"—that's no way to talk of dukes and duchesses. I can excuse a little irregularity in Lady Gwynedd's conduct now. I had no idea her rank was quite so high. I am not at all offended now.'

So said Mrs. Caradoc, and thought she was speaking the truth, but an hour or so later resentment gained the upper hand again, and she said something about getting 'that letter to Scarborough finished.'

A day or two afterwards the performance took place. To the very last Mrs. Caradoc buoyed herself up with the hope that some tickets would fall in, and she would have the opportunity of buy-

ing one, but no such opportunity was afforded her, and she had to see Juliet go alone. She dismissed her with these words: 'I shall never forgive Lady Gwynedd for the way she has treated me. She must have known what a run there would be on these tickets, and ought to have made me take one when she first spoke of your acting. Duke's daughter or not, she shall know what I think of her!'

The play was a brilliant success. Mrs. Caradoc read about it in the newspapers, and said: 'How I wonder Lady Gwynedd has not been here to talk it over with me! But I dare say she will come.'

After two or three days of vain expectation, she said: 'That Lady Gwynedd of yours is dropping us. I can't bear to be taken up and put down.'

'Neither can I, but perhaps we have no right to expect anything else.'

Days passed, and Mrs. Caradoc found by the newspapers that other entertainments were now going on at Peveril House. Peveril House and Peveril society had grown to be the desire of Mrs. Caradoc's life. 'She ought to ask us to some of these things—we helped her with her play,' said the old lady bitterly.

'I wish you would not think about her, aunt. She never really made friends of us.'

'She makes a friend of that amatoor Congreve. Juliet, I hope you never spoke to him when you were there. I let you go to the house because I thought it would be an enjoyment and advantage to you to be seen there, but she was only pursuing her own selfish ends. Better people than she are glad to know me. I am forgetting—did you speak to Mr. Congreve?'

'Of course I did! I spoke a great deal to him. I could not help it when we were acting together. If I was not to speak to him, I ought not to have gone there.'

'Oh! then I am to bear the blame of everything, am I? I wish I had not let you go; but I will never forgive Lady Gwynedd! Juliet, I insist on your dropping all acquaintance with her, and with that Congreve too. They shall be paid back in their own coin: I renounce them both and all their works.'

Having said that, she went to her writing-table, and much Juliet feared that, if only for the sake of having something new to think about, she was going to finish and despatch that fatal letter to Scarborough. Juliet watched her in sorrow and anguish. There was something that was infinitely pathetic in the unhappy



girl's eyes as she did so—they were the eyes of one who sees that for her all good days are well-nigh over. Mrs. Caradoc took a sheet of paper and wrote to a house-agent to say that she would take a certain house at the Lakes, which had been much recommended by Mr. Gerard, for the months of August and September. Then she wrote to Sir Gregory Jervaulx to withdraw the prohibition under which he was languishing. He was still not to come to London, but she invited him to visit her at Limberthwaite. Finally, as if the day for settling everything had come, she took out her letter to the Bransbys; once more added a few lines, sealed it, and placed it with the others intended for the post. Juliet saw what she had done, and quietly left the room. Entreaties and remonstrances would be useless; besides, she felt as if she could say no more. She retired to her own room, but could not bear the sight of it, for it would be hers such a short time longer, and finally she went out of doors.

An hour or two later Mrs. Caradoc was driving home from a long and wearisome afternoon in the park, when from her carriage window she saw Juliet. She was apparently returning to Berkeley Square, and her dress looked as if she had been walking a long time, and had been too much engaged in conversation to think of humouring it in the matter of clean footpaths or crossings. Mr. Congreve was with her, and they were talking with very unusual earnestness. The carriage passed them before Mrs. Caradoc had sufficiently recovered from the shock given her by this fresh proof of her niece's perfidy. She was just going to order the coachman to turn back when she changed her mind, and determined to wait and see whether Juliet mentioned this meeting. If she did not, she should go. 'I will watch her,' she muttered; 'I will say nothing and watch her.'

But when next she saw Juliet that young lady said: 'I have been out, aunt. I met Mr. Congreve, and he walked part of the way home with me.'

'What did you talk about?' Mrs. Caradoc asked sharply.

'Oh, I don't know!'

She did not know, when they had been in such earnest conversation that their ears had been deaf to every sound and their eyes blind to every sight—when a trace, too, of the comfort and support that this conversation had given her was still lingering in her face!

'Oh! very well,' answered Mrs. Caradoc. 'You think you have a right to keep your own secrets, I suppose; but I should like you

to keep your ears open when anyone talks of a situation that is likely to suit, for I do not think it is probable that you will stay much longer with me. Don't try to persuade me; if I let you stay longer, it won't be because of anything you can find to say.'

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## CHAPTER XII.

### 'IT'S LIKE MAGIC.'

Their wedded life, as is the common lot, was made up of drizzle and dry weather, but innocence and worth dwelt in it.—*Carlyle*.

To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends.—*Dr. Johnson*.

GEORGE BRANSBY was an upright, straightforward, hard-working, and most painstaking medical practitioner, whose fate had led him to settle in Scarborough. Unluckily, a great many other doctors' fates had led them to settle there too, and Mr. Bransby was not made of the stuff to earn wealth in the medical profession in any place in the country where there were other doctors who could be sent for if he failed to please. In London, with money enough to keep him until his special gift began to tell, he would have made a very large fortune. His special gift was an uncompromising love of truth, and a conviction of the necessity for speaking it at all times, in all places, and at all risks. He was a martyr to this conviction already. Not only had it cost him his rich brother-in-law's favour and the handsome legacy which Mrs. Bransby had been led to expect, but it had lost him three-fourths of his patients in Scarborough. They could not forgive him the brusque and almost scornful speeches with which he received them when their ailments seemed to him imaginary. Now in London there is always an opening for an Abernethy. Brusqueness, even positive rudeness, is almost enjoyed by a patient when he thinks his doctor a genius, and London people would have credited Mr. Bransby with the genius, because no one without it would have dared to be so rude. In Yorkshire it is quite different. When a burly Yorkshireman most reluctantly submits to call in a doctor, that doctor makes him look like a fool if he says: 'Why on earth have you sent for me? You need no medicine—there is nothing the matter with you!' Still worse was it when languid, listless ladies, who would have been worth their weight in gold to him if

he would but have supplied them with ever-varying pick-me-ups, were told by him that all they wanted was a little hard work.

'It is almost cruel of you, father,' his girls sometimes said. 'No doubt you are right, but she does not believe it, and will never forgive you. You might just as well have given her a bottle.'

Among the lower classes in that part of the country this is the local term for medical relief. If a poor woman is ill, her neighbours say, 'She ought to have a bottle.' If she is cured, they say: 'The doctor gave her a bottle that fetched her round.' Mr. Bransby, however, would not give bottles where bottles did not seem to him to be required; but when a patient has made up his mind to have a bottle he goes to some one who will give it.

'Father,' said the girls, 'imaginary ailments want curing too. You never seem to think of that.'

'Oh yes, I do. When people are suffering in that way, I tell them what to do. I can't put money into my pocket by humbug.'

'I wish it would come in by some other way then,' sighed the girls.

It didn't, and there was such a necessity for it in the Bransby household. Mrs. Bransby was a clever housekeeper, her daughters were clever girls, but it needed their combined cleverness to make all ends meet.

'And to think, my dears, of your having such a rich aunt in London!' Mrs. Bransby often said. 'Mrs. Cradock is just rolling in money, and it all came from my poor dear brother. She might so easily give what would be perfect wealth to us without ever missing it. Oh, how I wish we could get her to take some notice of us!'

'She shall! Mother, we girls are intending to do something desperate if she doesn't do something nice for us soon,' said Milly, laughing as she spoke.

'You can do nothing—absolutely nothing; but she couldn't help being proud to own you, my dears, if she saw you,' replied Mrs. Bransby, looking lovingly at Milly, and wondering whether it would be possible for hard-hearted old Mrs. Cradock to resist her. All Mrs. Bransby's daughters were pretty; all were tall, well-grown, bright-eyed girls, with wavy golden hair, dazzling complexions, and very fine features. They held themselves well, walked well, and looked ladies every inch of them. Seen apart, each was strikingly handsome, but seen all together they were simply irresistible. Mrs. Bransby looked at Milly in her plain

dress and sighed. There were such lovely things in the Scarborough shop-windows just then—dresses and bonnets that would have made those dear girls of hers look even sweeter still. It was so hard to her not to be able to put a few pounds into their hands and say: 'Go and buy what you want, my darlings!'

'Don't sigh, mother,' said Lucy; 'we are all quite happy, but we should like to bring that old lady to a proper frame of mind. We must do it somehow. Our honour is at stake, for we have vowed to achieve success.'

'Mother,' exclaimed Milly, 'couldn't you be cruel to me, and goad me into running away from home and taking refuge with her? Footsore and weary, I would wend my way by the hard high road to London, creep into her gilded halls, and say: "Protect me from my mother. I am your niece; save me!"'

'She would turn you out,' said Lucy, the second. 'Now I mean to sit down this very afternoon and write to her. I shall tell her that I am ill with a surfeit of the "Sympathetic Pills." If she has any heart, that must touch her.'

'That's coarse, Lucy!' exclaimed Milly.

'Very coarse!' echoed Mary.

'I dare say it is—I know it is; but would any measure ever be carried if some coarse people didn't push themselves to the front, and snatch at means that refined people would disdain? They are the people who do the work, though, and I shall succeed too if I sacrifice a little useless refinement.'

'It won't do!' said Milly, laughing, for Lucy really talked as if she were in earnest. 'Then what do you propose to do, Mary?'

'Oh, I mean to go to London too, and to her, but I shan't let her know who I am. I shall take a situation in her family as housemaid. My "broughtings up" have qualified me. I'm quite competent. Then some day, when I have completely gained her stony old affections by the thoroughness of my dusting and scrubbing, I shall fling myself at her capacious feet and say: "It was for love of you that I did it. Aunt, aunt! blood is thicker than water! Take me to your heart, for I love you!"'

'Oh, you foolish children!' said Mrs. Bransby. 'What would your father think if he heard what you are saying?'

'He'd laugh, I hope, especially at such a use of the word "capacious." But we must stop talking now, and get on with our work.'

Each person in that house had her appointed tasks, and by the aid of one servant all the work was done, and done marvellously well.

'Yes, we must go,' said Milly; 'and you must not mind our talking nonsense, mother. None of us are going to demean ourselves by running after that disagreeable old Aunt Cradock; but it would be very nice if we could get her to run after us, and do something really nice and helpful. It makes us all quite miserable when you and father look anxious.'

'Father has not looked anxious lately. I was just thinking how handsome he was: he looks so firm and resolute, and so clever, and so wonderfully young for his age.'

'Perhaps Aunt Cradock is thinking of us at this very moment,' observed Mrs. Bransby. 'Perhaps she is on the point of doing something very nice for us. My dears, it is quite possible. I have often noticed that when we seem to talk or think a great deal about some particular person, that person is almost sure to be talking and thinking of us.'

The girls shook their pretty heads incredulously and fled to their daily duties. Mrs. Bransby had a large pile of needlework waiting for her, and sat down to reduce it. How worn and thin and old she was beginning to feel! How long the even tenor of her way had been an even tenor of languid submission to destiny! If good luck were ever coming to that household, it must come soon, or its visit would bring no enjoyment to her. She worked steadily, and thought of this and of many a thing beside, until she looked at the timepiece on the writing-table—Shakespeare trundling a wheelbarrow which contained a round clock—and saw that it was mid-day. George had been out all the morning seeing patients. 'Pray heaven that they all have serious illnesses,' she murmured devoutly, 'for if not, he will be so rude to them.' And then she was horrified at what she had inadvertently been betrayed into wishing, and hoped that heaven would know that she had done it by mistake, and pay no attention. About one o'clock her husband and the postman arrived together. Mr. Bransby took the letters and came in with them in his hand. He kissed her wan face as if he had not seen her for a month, and said: 'I do believe there is a letter from Mrs. Cradock.'

'From Mrs. Cradock! George, you don't mean it?' She was awed by the prompt fulfilment of her prophecy.

'Isn't that her handwriting?' he asked, giving her the letter. He had already turned it round and round, and carefully deciphered the postmarks, and now she still more slowly and carefully repeated that process. How odd it is that when people are most anxious

to know who has written to them they always interpose these delays!

'You could see by looking inside, dear,' gently suggested her husband, wise now after he himself had been foolish.

'So I could! It's her writing, I'm almost sure. It does seem so strange to get a letter from her after the conversation the girls and I have been having! My dear, there are pages and pages of it; but she signs herself "Katherine Slingsby-Caradoc." What can she mean? Oh, stay; there is something that refers to this in one of the postscripts. She says that perhaps she ought to point out to us that she has made a slight change in her name. Look, George; read this bit yourself, and tell me what you think she means.'

'I tell you! "Slingsby-Caradoc!" How can I tell you? I don't understand it myself! Good heavens!' dropping the letter as if it had stung him. 'She has invented an entirely new name for herself! "To suit Berkeley Square a little better," she says. What does that mean? Well, in all my born days I never heard of anything more idiotic! Here is Katherine Slingsby-Caradoc (with a hyphen), widow of plain Richard Cradock! Couldn't she keep the name her poor husband gave her?'

'Don't trouble yourself about that, dear; her stupidity doesn't matter to us. Let us read what she says—it is years since she has written.'

He picked up the letter, read half a page, and said: 'She wants us to let one of the girls pay her a visit.'

'Why, it's like magic!' exclaimed Mrs. Bransby, rising to her feet, upsetting her workbox, and sending reels of cotton and buttons rolling and spinning about in every direction. 'I tell you, George, it's just like magic! It's the very thing the girls and I have been wishing for and talking about all the morning! It's splendid!'

'Splendid? How can it be splendid to send one of our girls to stay with a stupid old woman who seems to be making a great fool of herself? She writes as if she were living in Berkeley Square. Why couldn't she stay where she was in Manchester? Why couldn't she keep the name her husband gave her?'

'Perhaps she has grown ashamed of the pills.'

'If I thought so—if I could but think so,' said he, and somewhat mollified he once more picked up the letter.

'Read the rest of it, George; there is ever so much more.'

So there was. It was the letter which Mrs. Caradoc had begun



to write so long before, and which had lain in her writing-case conveniently ready to her hand whenever Juliet offended, or Juliet's fine-lady friends slighted her. Then she had taken it out, and had added little bits corresponding to her own state of bitterness—bits which had periodically soothed her outraged feelings and worked off some of her indignation. She had begun by regretting the estrangement; then she had invited one of the girls to pay her a short visit in London to see the sights; then she said that she hoped that this short visit would but be the prelude to a visit of a much more permanent character; and finally she had ended by the statement that 'London was very hot at present, and that as there were three Miss Bransbys, and as she did not know which of them she would most like to have with her as a visitor, she thought that her best plan would be to come to Scarborough herself and make their acquaintance, with a view to making a choice of them.'

'A choice of them!' muttered Mr. Bransby. 'Odious old woman! She shall make no choice among my girls! Does she for one moment suppose that I would let her have one of my dear children?'

'Oh, George, be prudent! We won't let her have any of them for good, but we must conciliate her. You know yourself what a good thing it would be to be on good terms with her.'

'I should think you would enjoy what she proposes. I have no doubt you will find her and her party most agreeable visitors,' said he dryly. 'Perhaps I had better read you what she does say. "I shall bring with me Mr. Cradock's niece Juliet"—poor fellow! he has had no promotion, you see; he is Cradock still—"my maid, her maid, and we will stay with you for a week or so, and then I hope I shall carry off one of your girls to the Lakes with me, where I have taken a house for six weeks or more. In the event of your house being too small to receive me and my belongings, will you kindly secure apartments for me at the best hotel?"'

Mr. Bransby laughed aloud. 'Poor woman! In the event of my establishment being too small! I wonder whether she has any conception how small it is. A house with three little sitting-rooms and six bedrooms and one good little maid-of-all-work. It is an establishment that is absolutely unequal to making even the two maids comfortable. No, Mrs. Slingsby-Caradoc must of necessity descend at the best hotel.'

'Mrs. Slingsby-Caradoc ascended from a much worse house than this when she married my brother.'

'That will make her all the more difficult to deal with now.'

'Don't you trouble about the house, George. We can do very well. With the help of those dear good girls of ours, I will engage to have my sister Cradock and Juliet here, and make them so comfortable that they won't want to go away. They shall never see any shortcomings. But I cannot do with the maids.'

'Oh no, they must go to an hotel. What could you do with all those people here?'

But now the girls came in, and the great news was communicated to them. No words could express their amazement.

'Stop!' cried Milly, pouncing on a part of the letter which had escaped their observation. 'Father! mother! have you neither of you seen this?' It was a bit squeezed in by writing very small, and it ran up one side of the page. In their excitement, and with so much else to read, they had not observed it. Milly read aloud: "'Of course I will go to an hotel if you really prefer it, but I'd best like to come to you. I want to get to know you all. I shall never do that if you send me to an hotel. My tastes are quite simple; do not be afraid of me.'"

'She shall get to know us, the darling!' cried Lucy fervently. 'Let her come here, mother. She wants to come.'

'She wishes us to understand that she is able to revert to the simplicity in which her days were spent before she attained the bad eminence of Berkeley Square and two hyphenated names. Well, let her come here, my dear wife, if you like, but we will have no lady's-maids. She and Juliet may come, but we will have no one else.'

'Do you think she knows quite for certain that there are three of us?' asked Milly; 'or, if she has heard it, couldn't we persuade her that there are only two? I feel capable of immolating myself on the altar of the family. I will dress up like a servant, wait upon her, and work for her as no one ever did before, and she shall go away to the Lakes with Lucy or Mary, and never know that I am their sister. Think of it, mother—it could so easily be done.'

'We will neither act lies nor speak them, Milly,' said her father. 'Sit down, dear wife, and tell her that this is a very small house, but that we shall be glad to see her and Juliet if they will dispense with their maids, and that our girls will give them all the help they require while they are here. Won't that do, Milly?'

Mrs. Caradoc accepted with pleasure. She would come in a week's time. And now the girls gave all their time to making preparations. They were wild with excitement when her answer came, for surely this visit portended much good to them.

'If we could but find some way of permanently conciliating Aunt Cradock——' began Milly.

'Slingsby-Caradoc, Milly,' said her mother; 'be very particular about that.'

'Very. I promise. Permanently conciliating Aunt Caradoc (Slingsby must be understood, for it makes her name so long). You said, mother, that the quarrel arose out of father's determination not to recognise Uncle Caradoc's pills. What can we do to put that right? Short of selling our souls by assuring her that father never was able to cure a patient in his life unless he gave him Sympathetic Pills, I think that there is nothing that we ought to shrink from.'

'Nothing!' ejaculated her sisters fervently.

'Would it be too mean and deceitful to buy a few dozen boxes of the pills and let them be found empty in every room in the house?'

'And the money to buy them? and father?—he would be sure to say something.'

'Mother, would there be the least chance of getting father to go to bed before Mrs. Cradock comes, and stay there till she has gone? He will ruin everything if he doesn't!'

'So will you, darling, if you say Cradock.'

'But I won't. Caradoc—Caradoc—Caradoc! By the bye, what are we to do about our Cradocks? Are we to change them to Caradoc too, or are we not to partake in the family elevation?'

They had all received Cradock as a second name.

'That is a delicate question.'

'Oh, mother, keep father in bed, and then all will go so well. I am sure it will!' was the prayer of each girl.

How busy everyone was during the week before Mrs. Caradoc came! The girls were indefatigable, and as happy as the day was long. They made dresses for themselves, they superintended the making of one for their mother; and having arrayed themselves modestly and becomingly on the afternoon when Mrs. Caradoc was to arrive, they ran downstairs to see if their mother looked nice in her new dress. Poor Mrs. Bransby, who had been a beauty, and had possessed a remarkably fine figure, now took all the lessons they gave her about wearing her dresses with somewhat mournful meekness. She knew that in the long struggle for existence she had let her good looks go, or perhaps they would have gone anyhow. She was conscious that the time had come when her three grown-up daughters could not help pulling at her dresses, and

twisting them and her about, with a general air of dissatisfaction and hopelessness of making her look any better.

'Your frocks are charming, my dears,' she said when they ran in to look at her; 'so simple and becoming! Oh, don't think of me!' she exclaimed ruefully, when she felt the first fingers laid on her. 'It's no use troubling about my appearance—my day is done!'

'Your day done! Not a bit of it! We have none of us ever seen you look so nice,' but then another of them came and gave another little wrench to the skirt which 'somehow didn't sit.'

A minute later all this was forgotten, for Mr. Bransby came and said that he had not seen her look so well for years, and he never said anything he did not mean.

He was taken to see Aunt Caradoc's bedroom. 'Sixpence a yard muslin has done it, father,' said Milly. 'Sixpence a yard muslin has made that wilderness blossom like a rose.'

'What a view!' exclaimed Mr. Bransby, pushing away the new curtain with the disrespectful want of ceremony usual with his sex when pretty new curtains are concerned. 'What a view there is, to be sure!'

The bay lay beneath, and the whole of its semicircle could be seen—broad, clear, and almost as calm as a lake. A fleet of herring-boats with tawny and russet and dark rich coffee-coloured sails was lying anchored beneath the castle hill. The grey old ruin rose up above in its pathetic desolation, and very desolate too looked the pale green slopes on which it stood. At this period—that is, more than thirty years ago—the Scarborough of ancient days was not all but extinguished by gigantic hotels and pretentious lodging-houses. The red-roofed cottages in the old half of the town could still be seen from all parts, and the course of the straggling old streets traced as they more or less deviously led the way to the castle.

'My darlings,' said Mr. Bransby, 'we ought to thank God every day of our lives for letting us have such a view as that before our eyes.'

'And I was just going to say something so base, Milly, when father said that and made me feel ashamed, because we really are well off here,' Lucy whispered, while they were on their way downstairs. 'I was going to say that if Aunt Caradoc intended to do us any good I hoped she would do a good large piece. It's no use having little bits of good done you—you don't particularly feel them.'

'Hush!' replied Milly. 'There is no great harm in saying things of that kind half in jest as we have been doing all the week, but there is a danger of our being really base if we let it go any farther. Now that she is nearly here, I don't want to feel that every little thing I do for her is done in a mercenary spirit. I renounce all designs on her.'

'So do I,' cried each of the others in turn, and thus a solemn pact was made and observed.

Half an hour later they were peeping over the railings of the stairs to see Mrs. Caradoc come in. Their father was helping her and Juliet out of the cab. The girls expected to see a lady looking something like a duchess, with stately carriage and commanding appearance. They saw a stout lady, who nearly occupied the whole narrow passage, roll in. Juliet followed, wayworn and weary. She had, so to speak, had her head in the lion's mouth all the way from London. What a journey of torture it had been! She had possessed herself of a *Times* newspaper, but there was no fresh news from India, only a leading article in which such passages as this occurred: 'Give full stretch to your imagination; think of everything that is cruel, inhuman, infernal, and you cannot then conceive anything so diabolical as these demons in human form have perpetrated.' Juliet had given full stretch to her imagination, and as a result was more dead than alive.

Mrs. Bransby hurried forth to receive her guests.

'Mother looks a queen beside her,' said an ambushed girl.

'Why, of course she does,' said another.

And yet Mrs. Caradoc was so gracious—so pleased with her kind reception, with her nieces, with her pretty bedroom, with the view, with her nice tea and home-made cakes, and with the meal (which she would call a cold collation) at eight o'clock—that she won their hearts.

Nothing seemed to please Juliet. She held herself aloof from everything, sat with downcast eyes, and never spoke unless some one asked her a question.

'She must have something very painful on her mind, poor girl. She looks as if she had committed a murder,' said Lucy.

'Or was just going to commit one,' suggested Mary.

## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

IN the last number of *Harper's Magazine* Mr. W. D. Howells takes leave of that department in which he has so often rebuked us for our many insular infirmities. He keeps up this humour to the last; he girds at writers whom we still believe in, still admire, still expect to last as long as literature. Is this to be the end of the game? Are there to be no more snaps and scoffs, no more international tennis of flouts and jeers, with Mr. Howells 'smashing' at the net? Probably he will play again in some other court, assert himself in some other serial. He really would be missed, he provides so many topics, he is so happy in evolving points of difference. It has never seemed to me wise or humorous to be wroth with Mr. Howells, but rather to return his services with a little chaff. After all, we may differ about literature, or even about the future of the world, without losing our tempers. Literature and the world will never be exactly all that Mr. Howells hopes. On the other hand, some of our own favourites are not meant to wear for ever, but to amuse the passing moment. Among these I do not include *Puss in Boots*, whom Mr. Howells has been belabouring, as he confesses. That cat has more than nine lives. If ever we become so cultivated as to read nothing lighter than didactic fiction, the patron of the Marquis de Carabas will not die, for all that. He is popular in the Soudan, on the northern slopes of the Caucasus, in India, and among many races whom even Mr. Howells cannot expect to study novels about our duties to society—among races, in fact, who do study anything at all. In the boughs of the bô-trees Puss is perfectly safe. Mr. Howells cannot get at him with his bludgeon, and verily Puss will survive the whole generation of thoughtful novelists. He is vital with a perfect disregard of duty, except the duty of entertaining. No change of morals, no revolution of ideas, can work the slightest harm to Puss in Boots and his gallant



companions. In man's worst distresses he will welcome anybody who can divert him. I mind me of a very little boy who was very ill indeed, and who asked his sick-nurse to tell him a story. The poor girl began a didactic tale about a young Jewess who was converted to Christianity. The indignation of that small sufferer was expressed in language of extreme candour. He did not want a didactic tale: he wanted the *Red Etin of Ireland*, or something of that kind. So it will be with humanity; not for the moment, perhaps, but certainly in the long run. To be sure, we are a terribly didactic race. Mr. Earle has lately published a translation of *Beowulf*, the oldest Old English poem—as old, at least, as Offa of Mercia, whom you may read about in the *Norman Conquest*. The basis of the narrative is pure romance: contains fights with sea-monsters, fen-monsters who drag men out of the hall and eat them, fights with firedrakes, every kind of natural diversion. All that is obviously heathen, and as old as *Puss in Boots*. But an early Englishman, about 800 A.D. or so, has taken these attractive topics, and has interlarded them with reflections of a moral character. Even then, even in the ninth century, we loved a sermon, as the French did not love one, nor the Scandinavians. It is this old leaven, this desire to mingle instruction with amusement, that works in Mr. Howells and his favourite writers. Ah! do not let him taunt us, of all people, with not liking a sermon, in season and out of season: to like a sermon is part of our nature. The poet of King Offa interlarded with moralities his good Northern materials, wherein nobody had preached; everybody had faced his firedrakes, and other fearful wild-fowl, with the short sword. At present, perhaps, the taste for didactics is stronger in America than in England; but America is English too, hence her love of discourses. It is in the blood and bone of us; yet even we have hours when we feel no desire for discourses—when, in fact, we prefer Paul de Kock.

\* \* \*

TO W. D. H.

And have we heard you, W. D.,  
 For this, the latest time, declare  
 That Intellectuality,  
 Save in these Islands of the sea,  
 Is everywhere?

## AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.

That all the world, the Muscovites,  
 The Realists of sunny Spain,  
 And every Frenchman who delights  
 To count the smells and name the sights  
 Of every drain,

Is greater than clean clumsy Scott,  
 Than inartistic Thackeray?  
 Oh, hast thou fired thy latest shot,  
 Or is it but a cunning plot  
 That thou dost lay?

And shall we hear thee, elsewhere, still  
 Repeat the old familiar chatter,  
 Loud as the hopper of a mill?  
 Well, as it does not seem to kill,  
 It does not matter!

Nay, far from earth, serene and strong,  
 The smiling Thackeray forgives;  
 While 'Yarrow as he rolls along  
 Bears burden to the minstrel's song'—  
 Sir Walter lives!

While Hawthorne holds unshaken place  
 Among the children of the pen,  
 While wit, adventure, joy, and grace,  
 In every clime, in every place,  
 Are dear to men,

You cannot, though you strive and sigh,  
 Shake one leaf on the laurel crown.  
 Write not yourself,—none else will try,  
 T'were grossly rude,—what Dogberry  
 Would be writ down!

\* \* \*

There is one notable distinction among novelists and novelists, which perhaps we too much disregard. Some are ruthless to their characters, while some are tolerant and forgiving. Among the ruthless is George Eliot. She quite persecutes Rosamond, in *Middlemarch*—the pretty Rosamond, who, we feel sure, had something good in her, somewhere. To Hetty, in *Adam Bede*, she is relentless; compare Hetty with Effie Deans in *The Heart of*

*Midlothian*. Thackeray, too, has no pity for Blanche Amory, none for our dear Becky. He makes them drink the cup of degradation to the lees. When Esmond scolds Beatrix, at the moment when he announces the death of her betrothed, the Duke of Hamilton, can we forgive Esmond? It was no time for preaching. When Beatrix, in later days, marries Tom Tusher, we feel the story like an affront. How different is Scott! He assures us that even the rascally Copper Captain, Craigengelt, was provided for by Bucklaw. He leaves even Ratcliffe a conscience which 'whiles gies a bit dirl.' In Mr. Stevenson's new tale, *The Wrecker*, the hero finds some not unamiable qualities—such as love of literature, a religious emotion, a pitifulness of heart, even in the 'shyster' of the story, who, to be sure, is a very dastardly villain. Henry Kingsley had this kindness for his creations—the kindness of Shakespeare for Parolles. We all need to make for others the allowances that we habitually make for ourselves. Yet some of the greatest writers have not always been so merciful to their own children, and this ruthlessness appears to be approved of by earnest critics. I own that I am glad to know Craigengelt had his sufficient beef and claret secured to him; he was not without his qualities—he was good at games. I hate to think of Becky with the brandy and the dirty pink *peignoir*; I don't believe that she poisoned Jos. I am convinced Rosamond was, at least, too good for Lydgate; and, generally, hold that we have all consciences, like Ratcliffe; and that, in fiction at least, a place of repentance might be provided for the puppets. If Nature is inexorable, the more reason that we should not be so—should not drive all our poor rats to die in corners. Of course, when a villain is to be the regular villain of the *Petit Journal*—a stock figure, not a human character—he cannot be too consistent, nor his creator too severe. Boil him, scalp him, leave him up to his knees in boiling lava, lose him in the Catacombs, by all means. The art of the *Petit Journal* has laws of its own.

\* \* \*

### THE GOLDEN HOUR.

Steeped in a mellow, orange-golden glow,  
 Dark, clustered elms touch hands across the lane  
 Strange glories crown the gabled stacks arow,  
 And gild each lumbering amber-laden wain.

In jewelled bravery of gold and green  
 The pallid stubble glistens to the sky,  
 'Neath limpid seas of luminous air serene,  
 Where homing rooks float drowsily on high.

Infinite pleasure takes the sense—and yet  
 Fades in a moment, smitten into pain;  
 Changed for a fruitless passion of regret,  
 As elfin treasure turns to earth again.

And gladness falters like a silenced song—  
 Sinks with the flame of sunset's coloured fire;  
 So short th' illumined hour! Alas, so long  
 The inextinguishable vain desire!

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

\* \* \*

An historical mystery is quite as good reading as any novel. Let the *blasé* student try the Gowrie Conspiracy; it is delightful, in the original authorities. There is lying here a picture of the Gowrie House in Perth (an historical edifice long ago abolished by the spirit of the age), and a plan of the rooms and galleries. King James, as we know, was sent for to Falkland by the Ruthvens, lured by a story of a pot of gold that had been discovered. His Majesty rode to the Earl of Gowrie's, dined there at the late hour of two, left the hall with young Ruthven, and was said by Lord Gowrie (Ruthven's brother) to have left the house by the garden. The porter denied that he had left the house, and James was heard screaming out of a turret window. His attendants rushed up, found him in the turret, and stabbed young Ruthven, who was there. What had happened? We have a narrative by a servant of the Ruthvens, who was, or was not, in the turret, and who declared that Ruthven was about murdering the King. Now the interesting thing is, that, when this man's narrative is studied in the light of a plan of the house and turret, it holds water, and exactly explains the King's situation when he was bellowing out of the window. The construction of the turret and the position of its windows are such that the event could only have occurred as the witness stated that it did occur. Thus we may at least admit it as probable that James did not invent a plot for the purpose of ruining the Ruthvens, but that they designed to seize him, if not to murder him. Catching the monarch and keeping him was then the Scotch manner of forming a Ministry.

But Lord Gowrie was unsuccessful in his effort to make a Cabinet, and he and his brother were 'whingered' upon the spot. The plans are given in the *Transactions of the Perth Antiquarian Society* (1827). In 1822 Scott was engaged on a series—never published—of *Familiar Letters* in the reign of King James. Constable suggests a study of old sermons and other tracts on the Gowrie Conspiracy, which seems a capital theme for a stirring romance. But Scott wrote instead *The Fortunes of Nigel*.

\* \* \*

In the same receptacle of antiquarian old-womanries we find a curious account of St. Andrews at the end of the seventeenth century (1697). The Professors wanted to move the University to Perth, because victuals were so dear in the ancient town; goods of all kinds were so scarce; the water was bad and dirty; the air is 'thin and piercing, even to an excess': the place is a village, full of dunghills and herring-guts. Moreover, town and gown are on bad terms: the gown has contrived a scheme for burning the town; the town has levelled cannon at the gates of the college. The town 'is much set on tumultuating.' The St. Andrews citizens 'have an aversion and hatred to Learning and Learned Men'; 'in our knowledge there was not anyone capable to win his bread by Learning (except our Bibliothecar), who was born in St. Andrews'; 'Never was one farthing doted to our University by any burges of St. Andrews.' The University thinks that, at Perth, it might civilise the Highlands. It despairs of civilising St. Andrews. Fortunately things have mended; the migration to Perth was never made.

\* \* \*

A very interesting skeleton of a person eight feet six inches high has been discovered in the Red Rocks cave at Mentone. Some thirty years ago other skeletons were found there, but this is the tallest. The soil of the caves is so full of prehistoric bones and chips, that you may dig them up with the point of a walking-stick. Completely sheltered, and taking the sun, the cave must have been much more luxurious than that of St. Andrews, which looks north, is almost in the wash of the waves, and was the cell of St. Ceannech or some other ascetic thirteen hundred years ago, long before A. K. H. B. A golf-club maker was startled lately by a letter from a gentleman who wanted a cleek, and said that his height was eight feet and a half, like that of the skeleton. It was a *lapsus calami*, he meant five feet eight and a half. But

imagine how the Mentone man must have *driven* had he been a golfer! A 'carry' of a quarter of a mile would have been a mere 'foozle' to him, with his height and leverage.

\* \* \*

Talking of St. Andrews leads the mind to Archbishop Sharpe, and Wodrow's story of Sharpe's wraith. The prelate was at Edinburgh; he wanted a document in his desk at St. Andrews (he had a house near the harbour; only a gateway survives), and he sent his running footman to bring the paper. The man came in six hours, arriving at the house at four in the afternoon. The pace is excellent, but, in the *Bride of Lammermoor*, Scott gives an account of the great speed and endurance of these athletes. As he entered the Archbishop's room the footman saw the prelate sitting at the bureau which contained the paper. 'You have ridden fast, my Lord; I did not see you on the road,' said the servant. The appearance arose, and moved out of the room. The man called the steward, and *both* saw the Archbishop standing, with a forbidding countenance, at the top of the stairs, whence he disappeared. It is a very good instance of a wraith, or 'apparition of the living.' The ingenious Mr. Stead, whose historical ghosts are carelessly handled, should consult Wodrow's *Analecta*, where the tale occurs. There is a ghost story in every ten pages, illustrating the uniformity of habit and custom so notable in spooks. The house of the Archbishop, by the way, was haunted, according to a letter which Wodrow received from another minister; and a later archbishop, investigating the affair, got a terrible fright. The Psychical Society might make researches in historical ghost stories; they would be more interesting than many of the Society's *Transactions*.

\* \* \*

The following version of Hood's poem is communicated by a justly celebrated golfer:—

I remember, I remember, the links where I was born,  
The little club with little lead and hardly any horn:  
It never wanted anything except a little glue,  
Now half my set is at the shop and t'other half is new.

I remember, I remember, the free and fearless swing:  
The club then felt a part of me—I drove like anything.  
Now I must think of 'slowly up' and down with proper speed,  
And all the other articles of the good golfer's creed.



I remember, I remember, how once I used to putt;  
 The three-foot ones I could have held with both my optics shut;  
 But conscience, born with riper years, 'makes cowards of us all,'  
 And just because I know I ought, I cannot hole a ball.

I remember, I remember, when I began to bet,  
 I wondered over sixpence lost, how that was to be met;  
 And now when bigger stakes I've won I find, to my annoy,  
 That crowns to men ain't half such fun as sixpence to a boy.

\* \* \*

How interesting is M. Renan's confession that he writes books on serious subjects because he wished to be jolly, and found that Paul de Kock, who wrote cheerful books, was sombre! Poor Paul de Kock never thought of being funny about Jeremiah, or likening Isaiah to a sandwich man. M. Renan, being naturally humorous and melancholy, has, perhaps, kept up his own spirits, and certainly he added to the gaiety of nations, when he wished to be a pretty girl's prayer-book. The orthodox, like Mrs. Oliphant in her book on Jerusalem, probably do well in not taking M. Renan very seriously.

ANDREW LANG.

### *The 'Donna.'*

THE EDITOR begs to acknowledge the following contributions. Sums received after March 8 will be entered in the May number.

Mrs. Price-Dent 1*l*. A March contribution 2*s*. 6*d*. Harleston 2*s*. 6*d*. H. W. 10*s*. A Worker 10*s*. (Night Refuge). H. L. 2*s*. Mrs. Rivers 5*s*. (Night Refuge). M. C. (Night Refuge) 2*s*. 6*d*. Guy Pears 4*s*. C. M. M. C. 2*s*. 6*d*. E. H. 2*s*. 6*d*. A Sympathiser (Night Refuge) 2*s*. 6*d*. ('Donna') 2*s*. 6*d*. C. E. S. H. 1*l*. 1*s*. W. L. J. (Night Refuge) 10*s*. M. H. 1*l*. B. W. 5*s*. L. and M. F. 1*l*. Mr. and Mrs. Noble Taylor and their household 2*l*. Elizabeth A. Coward 10*s*. The Aunts ('Donna') 10*s*. 10*d*. Workroom 10*s*. 11*d*. P. M. S. and R. R. 10*s*. Ludlow 3*s*. 6*d*. C. J. Tallan ('Donna') 5*s*. (Night Refuge) 5*s*. M. Gilchrist Thomas ('Donna') 1*l*. (Night Refuge) 1*l*. Sarum 5*s*. J. B. 1*l*. 1*s*. W. H. W. 5*s*. A. S. W. 5*s*. Mrs. Oates 5*s*. C. and L. S. 1*s*. Sutton Valence School Mission Fund 1*l*. 1*s*. Miss L. Aldridge 10*s*. Miss Mary Barber 5*s*. M. A. C. 10*s*. L. H. C. (Night Refuge) 5*l*. Lucas Thomasson ('Donna') 3*l*. 10*s*. (Night Refuge) 3*l*. 10*s*. Workroom 3*l*. J. S. S. 5*s*. M. A. H. 3*s*. Jack 5*s*. C. H. W. 2*s*. 6*d*. F. Hannen 1*l*. 1*s*. D. Julia Turner 5*s*. The Heidelberg Magazine Club 2*l*. 12*s*. J. R. S. 10*s*. M. K. 5*s*. G. P., Madras ('Donna') 1*l*. 7*s*. 6*d*. (Night Refuge) 2*l*.

Comforters, clothing, &c., from Anon. J. E., Huddersfield. A. M. W. and C. E. E. M. L. B., Springfield, Bedford. E. J. L. Mrs. H. J. Tollit. A. S. W. Nellie Perkins (aged eight, her own work). J. B. L. Dawlish and Miss Potter.

The Sisters have received the following direct:—For Refuge:—Per Miss Trench, D.K.S., 119 woollies; Mrs. Saltmarsh, old clothes; Per Miss Trench, D.K.S., 4 large parcels of woollies; W. Codrington, men's clothes; Mrs. C. Kay, comforters; A.P.S., woollies; John Pan, Esq., old clothes; M.G.W., 6 mufflers; Mrs. Charlton, woollies; Anon., 4 woollies; Miss Bowers, suit of clothes; Mrs. Feager, socks and scarves; A. C. D., scarf; N 639, woollies; Mrs. Scott, 3 woollies; Mrs. H. Martin, scarf; C. Peel, Esq., 2 vests and comforter; Miss Mathew, scrap work; C. J. M., socks and cuffs; Relinalcohn, socks and shoes; Miss Burdock, socks, scarves, and cuffs; Mrs. Kinahan, 1*l.*; Anon., 10*s.*; For Workroom:—H. Whitwell, bales of serge; Anon., scarf; Apus, woollies; Miss Thuges, scarf and cuffs; Miss Newington, men's clothes; Miss Bowen, 2 dozen scarves, vests, and socks; 4 Refuge, 1*l.*; Mrs. Fox, 10*s.*; Renna, 2*s.*; Z. Y. X., 2*s.*; M. F. N., 4*s.*; C. P. C., 2*s.*; Per Miss Howell, 10*s.*; B. M. M., 2*s.*; Miss E. A. Wilkinson, 5*s.*; E., 2*s.*; F. F. Reade, 12*s.*; A Widow's mite, 10*s.*; Anon., 2*s.*; Anon., 2*s.*; From a Friend (Clifton), 2*s.*; From a Reader in Aberdeen, 2*s.*; H., 1*l.*; A. S., 10*s.*; E. B., 2*s.*; Anon., 2*s.*; E. B., 2*s.*; Clothing sold, 14*s.*; Clothing sold, 1*s.* 2*d.*; Mrs. Andrews, 5*s.*; F., 1*s.*; Tallee, 10*s.*; B. E. E., 2*s.*; St. John's, 2*s.*; Mrs. Giles, 4*s.* For 'Donna':—E. Loyd, 2*s.* 6*d.*; Mrs. Newson, 10*s.*; Anon., 15*s.*; Miss Brewster, 2*s.*; Miss Champney, 2*s.* 6*d.*; Mrs. Hallowell, 2*s.* 6*d.*

Miss Trench, Pulham St. Mary, Norfolk, acknowledges with many thanks 26 mufflers, 16 pairs of socks, 1 vest, and 2 chest-preservers, received for the 'Donna' Knitting Society, since the various woollies acknowledged in LONGMAN'S for March. Also 2*s.* from a lady for immediate lodging at the Night Refuge for some poor houseless man for eight days.

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*The Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE,*

*39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.*

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